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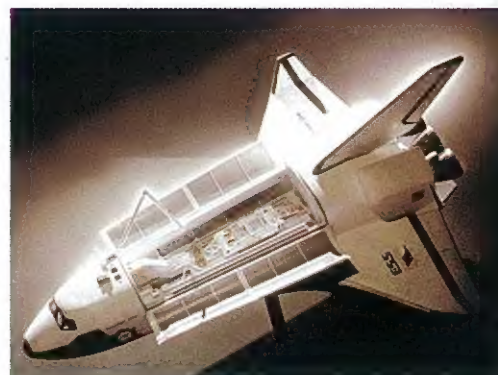
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Left: Starfury special edition—*Sinclair's* version. See article page 18.

Above: *Mission Impossible* shuttle—page 50.

Below: *Ultra Probe* scratchbuild—page 46.



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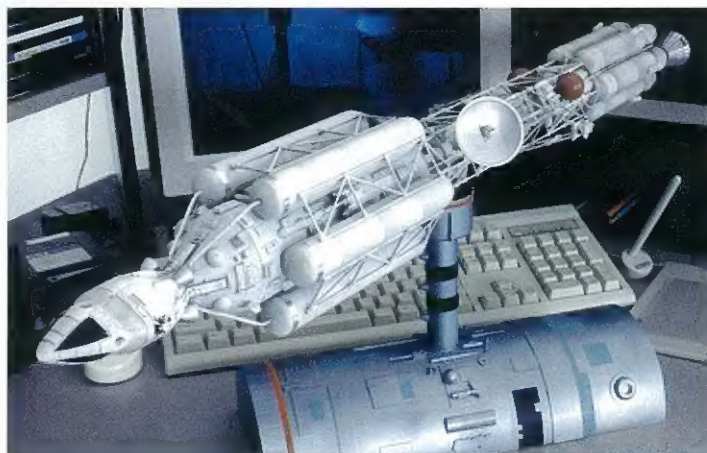
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From the editorial desk

By a strange coincidence each of the quick-info bytes I'm hurriedly typing up as we put the finishing touches to issue 36 seems to begin with the word "more"...

—More colour

Surprise! From this edition you'll notice that there's a distinctly more colourful feel to your favourite genre modelling and FX magazine, because from this issue onwards we're pleased to be able to bring you a regular, extra helping of colour pages with each issue of **Sci-Fi & Fantasy Models International** at no extra cost—even more reason, methinks, to consider placing a regular order with your stockist or to subscribe today if you haven't already done so.

—More pages

Our twice-yearly sister magazine **Effects Special**, the second issue of which launches in May, will also feature more colour from now on, and has been rounded up from 96 to 100 pages with no increase in price! If you turn to the back page of this magazine you'll find a special offer advertisement bringing you full details of how to take delivery of **ES 2** post-free* by ordering from us before May 30th., and how newcomers to the title can enjoy a package of issues 1 and 2 post-free* by using one of the saver tokens.

—More readers

It's a big welcome to our new readers in Japan, France and Argentina, plus additional **SF&F**ers in the US and Canada. We're delighted to have each and every one of you on board and look forward to featuring your comments, model shots, projects and FX stories in our magazine in the near future.

—More Collector Specials

Our second **Special Collector Issue** is being prepared now for publication later in the year. You're gonna love this one—but we're not going to tell you what the theme is quite yet—let's just say it has something to do with a certain date. Stay tuned...

And that about rounds up the editorial column for this issue, except to say that Dave, pink eyes glued to the monitor, says "Hi"; that Rebecca Faye Openshaw, fists tightly shut, says "Gimme *More Milk*" (a baby after my own heart... and quite soon, I shouldn't wonder, after my *food* too), and that, in all seriousness, I have to say to some TV network out there, "*please* take on **Crusade** so that we can look forward to a further *five years* of intelligent Science Fiction rather than a mere thirteen episodes." (I'm sticking my neck out here because we haven't seen the new series yet in the UK, but if **B5**, give or take a few episodes, is anything to go by...)

See you June 4, with issue 37 of **Sci-Fi & Fantasy Models International** magazine.

Mike Reccia

Editor,

Sci-Fi & Fantasy Models and Effects Special magazine.

P.S. Apologies to S. M. Clark, who kindly provided us with the shots of his kit-builds for Anthony Taylor's Aurora "Irwin Allen" kits article in issue 35, for the omission of his photo credits.

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Sci-Fi & Fantasy Models International
ISSN: 1354-3024

Publishing dates (1999):

4 Jun, 21 Jul, 9 Sept, 26 Oct, 8 Dec.

Printed in the U.K. by Warners.

Newsstand distribution

Seymour:

Tel: 0171 396 8000 Fax: 0171 396 8002

Comic book stores distribution—N. America & UK:

Diamond Comic Distributors
1966 Greenspring Drive, Suite 300
Timonium, MD 21093 USA
Tel: (410) 560-7100

Hobby Shop Distribution—U.S. & Canada:

Kalmbach Publishing Co.
21027 Crossroads Circle P.O. Box 1612
Waukesha, WI 53187 U.S.A
Tel: (800) 558-1544 toll free or
414-796-8776 extension 413
Fax: 414-796-0126

ADVERTISING RATES: On application to:
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Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 5RR, U.K.

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Published in the UK by: Next Millennium Publishing Limited
Reg. Office: 564 Burnley Road, Crawshawbooth, Rossendale,
Lancashire, BB4 8AJ.
Registered in England and Wales: No. 2933721.

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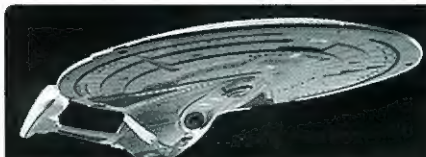
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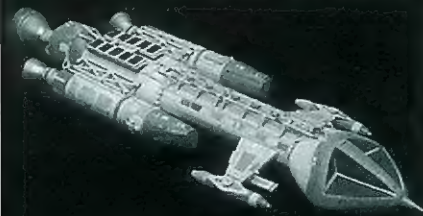
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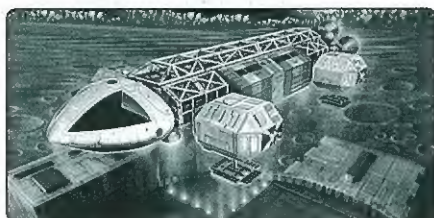
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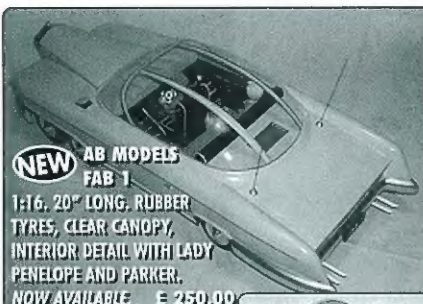
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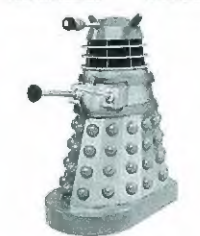
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The second issue of this title's twice-yearly sister publication—**Effects Special** magazine—is now available. Expanded to *one hundred pages* with *more colour* yet no increase in price, **ES 2** is devoted to unique fact-and-photo-packed all-special effects coverage. Categories include miniatures, prosthetics, animatronics, pyrotechnics, special make-ups and CGI.

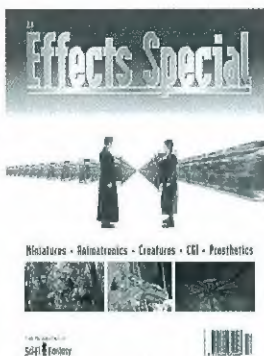
As with issue one, UK readers should note that they can only obtain copies of **Effects Special 2** from *Comet Miniatures*, *Forbidden Planet*, *Manchester*

Model Shop, selected specialist stores, and direct from *Next Millennium Publishing*. By using the token printed on the back page of this magazine (you can photostat this if you do not wish to damage your issue) UK readers can send for a copy of **Effects Special 2** POST-FREE* if their order reaches us **BEFORE MAY 31**. This is a saving of one pound on normal postage prices, which will be in effect from June 1 onwards.

There's also a tempting offer for those readers who have not yet caught up with **Effects Special** issue 2—turn to the back page now for full details of our limited-offer discounts on

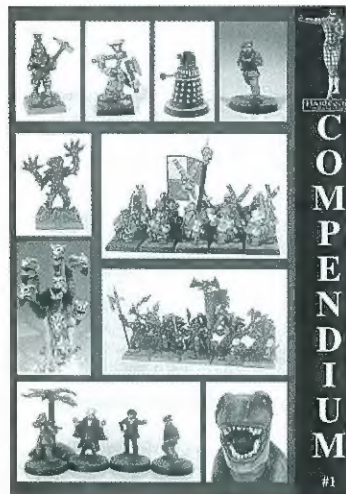
these must-have genre publications.

*Readers outside UK—please refer to back page ad for postal rates.



Harlequin Compendium

The *Harlequin Compendium* is a concise catalogue detailing hundreds of metal 25mm miniatures available from *Harlequin Miniatures*. A bonus for sci-fi fans is the inclusion of a colour centre spread picturing all the models available in *Harlequin's* current **Doctor Who** licensed range. The compendium retails at £3.50 and is available from both *Harlequin Mail Order* (Tel: 0115 9422265) with a £1.50 p&p charge (UK), and from comic and game retailer shops.



Harlequin Babylon 5 figures

Harlequin Miniatures have announced that a contract to produce 25mm metal miniatures based on the **Babylon 5** television series and motion pictures has been secured from *Warner Brothers Studios*.

As with the company's **Doctor Who** range, *Harlequin's Babylon 5* design agenda will be focused on characters from the series, with the first release showcasing the major leads from the show.

The **Babylon 5** range will initially be packaged in boxed sets of five miniatures at a price of £15.00/\$30.00 per set. The collectability of all *Harlequin Miniatures Babylon 5* products will be enhanced by the fact that all releases will be on a strictly limited edition basis.

Virus figures

A range of figures based on characters seen in the *Universal* sci-flick **Virus**, itself based on a *Dark Horse Comics* series, has been released by *Bandai UK*. *Kelly Foster*, *Steve Baker*, *Captains Everton* and *Alexi* and *Richie* are available, each with weapons and accessories at £9.99, together

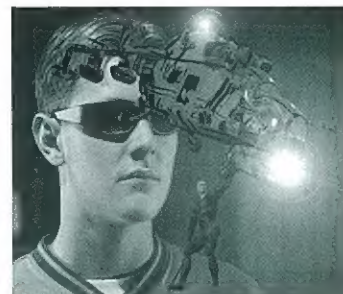
with a *Nadia* and *Goliath* boxed set at £29.99.



Toy Patrol gets go-ahead

Liverpool-based independent production company *Multi Media Arts* has signed a deal with *BBC Scotland* to develop a thirteen part children's fantasy drama. The series, which has the working title **Toy Patrol**, features live action and 3D animation and is due to be launched by the *BBC Rights Agency* at Cannes in April. *Multi Media Arts* Director Mark Gorton said, "**Toy Patrol** is the story of a teenaged genius who uses nanotechnology to create a miniature task force of 21st century crusaders, vehicles and aircraft to combat evil in all its forms. The series aims to capture the excitement of every child's dream—to be able to bring toys to life."

Liz Scott, Head of Children's TV at *BBC Scotland*, said: "**Toy Patrol** will be a fantastic drama and I am delighted to be working with *Multi Media Arts* on such an ambitious project."



Comet News

Leonov launched

New from *Planet X* is a ten inch long *Leonov* spaceship as featured in the movie *2010*. The GRP resin kit is in scale with the company's 2001/2010 *Discovery* kit and retails at £49.50 plus £3.00 UK postage from *Comet*.

Last Starfighter

Available now is a 1/72 scale *Gunstar* kit (see opposite) from *The Last Starfighter* that weighs in at approximately ten inches wide by ten inches long. The kit features full cockpit detail and a full set of decals and is limited to just twenty-five copies. *Comet* customers are advised to order their copy now. Kit retails at £79.50 plus £5.00 postage UK (overseas customers please ring for postage rates).

Martians return

Comet's *Martian Fighting Machine* kit has been retooled and modified for easier construction. The kit, which now features improved, more supportive legs, costs £27.50 plus £3.00 UK p&p.

Polar Robby

Polar Lights' injection plastic 1/6 scale *Robby the Robot* from *Forbidden Planet*, complete with diorama base and laser pistol, will be in stock at *Comet Miniatures* from late July at £23.00 plus £3.00 UK p&p. Advanced orders are now being taken as only a small number of kits will be available from *Comet*. *Polar Lights'* 1/8 scale *Goldfinger James Bond* and *Odd Job* kits will also be stocked in July at £23.00 each plus £3.00 per kit UK shipping and handling, or £45.00 for both kits post free (UK mainland only).

Warp variations

Two modifications have been announced to *Warp's* release schedule. Firstly, their *Borg Cube* kit, which previously retailed for £60.00, has been re-released at the lower price of £49.50 inclusive of a three inch *Enterprise-D* model with decals. Further, and because of the limited reissue of the *AMT/Ertl Star Trek 6 Enterprise-A*, *Warp* have rereleased their battle damaged movie *Enterprise* conversion kit, including an *Enterprise-A* kit, at £49.50 post free (UK mainland only).

Dominion invasion finally begins

Some two years and three months after it was first announced, *Warp's* *Jem 'Hadar* ship, in scale with their *Klingon Bird of Prey* resin, has finally been issued. The eight inch by eight inch kit is available from *Comet* at £39.50 plus £3.00 p&p (UK postage price only).

Warp '99

Work progresses on *Warp's* conversion kit for the *MPC eagle* rerelease, which will correct inaccuracies on the model and include parts to build the laboratory pod version. Ring *Comet* for price and availability.

SF3D plus 4

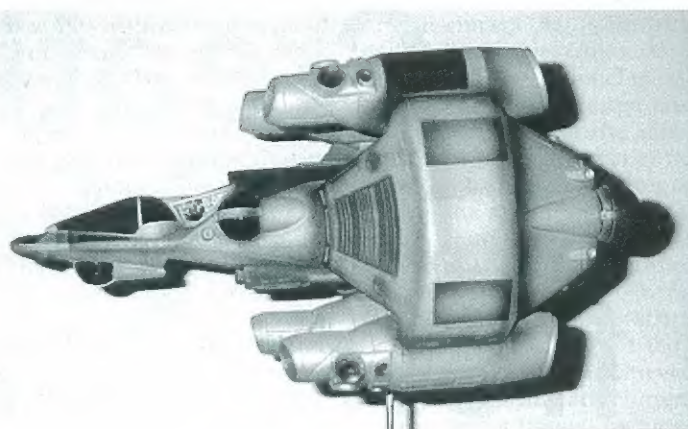
Nitto have added four kits to their *SF3D* injection rereleases—*PKA* (£14.00); *AFS Mk 1* (£14); *Jerry* (£30.00) and *The Fliege* (£14.00). Postage and packing (UK) is £3.00 per kit from *Comet*.

AB update

AB's new *Space:1999 Hawk* is now available from *Comet*. The company's mammoth forty four inch *eagle* kit is progressing well and July should see the release of a four foot long *Fireball XL5* with separate *Fireball Junior* and *jetmobiles* with figures, retailing at around the £300.00 mark. For exact prices and progress readers should check with *Comet*.

Blade/Scream

New from *Comet* are 1:6 scale figures of *Blade* by Jay/Dee (£59.50 plus £3.00 p&p) and the *Scream Killer* (£59.50 plus £3.00 p&p).



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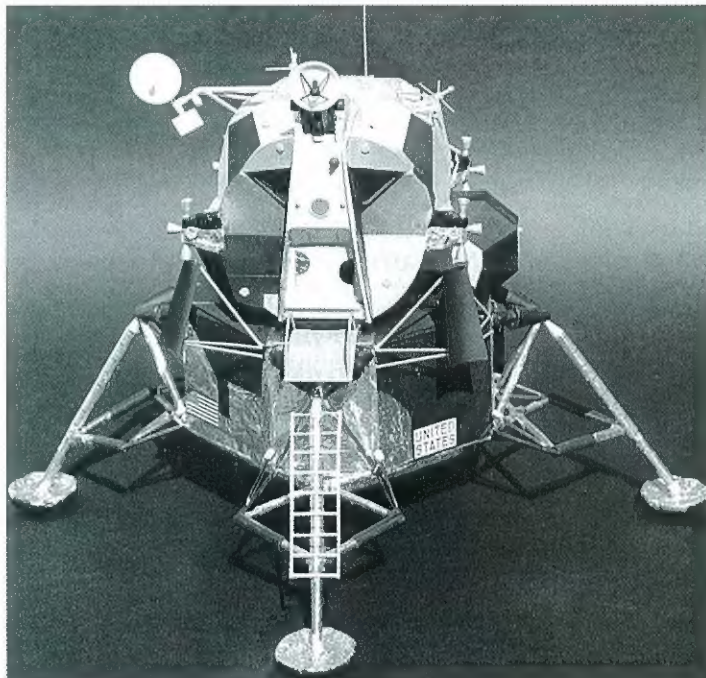
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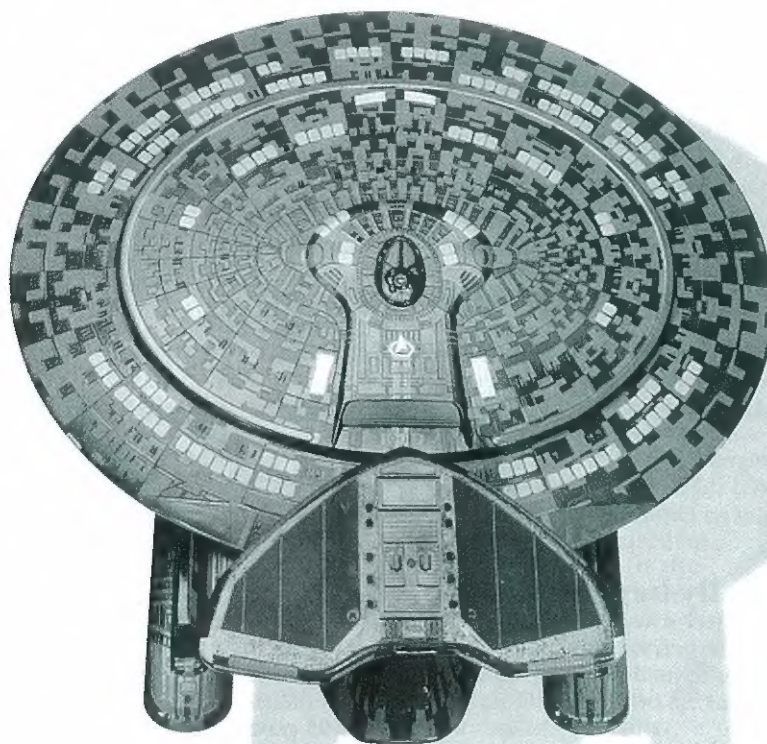
Large-scale LEM

Vista Replicas' Apollo Lunar Module is a 1/32 scale multi media kit which has taken two years of research and development to produce. Manufactured primarily of resin, with metal and plastic parts plus foil and decals, the kit comprises over 160 parts and includes a detailed interior. This is the first *Lunar Module* kit to be made in 1/32 scale and complements the *Monogram Command Module* kit which has been available for many years. *Vista Replicas' Lunar Module* is available by mail order only and retails at £85.00 plus £5 postage (Europe) or £15 (Rest of World). *Vista Replicas*, 20a Clarence Road, Croydon, Surrey, CRO 2EN, UK. Tel/Fax: 44(0) 181 684 9049. e-mail: vista@pad34.demon.co.uk



Creating the USS Farragut from Generations

chris ford



One of my favourite Star Trek starships is the USS Farragut as seen in *Generations*. I'm not really sure why. It could be the underslung warp engines along with that cool, top mounted sensor pod. It just looks so good. I read that the ship was born from a reworked Enterprise-D miniature, so I just had to have a go at constructing one for myself.

Research

First I researched this *Nebula* class starship for as much information on its appearance as I could obtain. I was disappointed to find very few visuals at the time. It appears as a number of differently named

ships in the *ST:ING* videos—the *USS Sutherland* being one of them—but is always photographed from the same angles: either a brief starboard profile or from just starboard of the lower bow. Either one gives a very limited view on which to base

a model. The best view by far comes from the brief rescue scene at the end of *Generations* (wide screen edition only). This gives a slight angular shot of the ship as it flies past the viewer in pretty sharp detail, leading to a stern end shot before it goes into warp and disappears. Warp engines, upper pylon, sensor pod, engine strut attachments, raised upper saucer, saucer attachment and lighting information can all be gleaned from this brief flyby, especially if you set the video for single frame viewing. I also found an appropriate—but small—line drawing of the *Nebula* class starship with correct sensor pod in the *ST Encyclopaedia*. This was a profile view, which would

suffice, but I needed a much larger one. I quickly did an experiment to test a theory as to whether this small line drawing was to the same scale as the engines and saucer of the *Enterprise-D* model I'd bought for the conversion. The model's warp engines each come in two halves, so I used one of the upper halves as a scale reference. I then enlarged the small line drawing via the photocopier until its engine size matched the actual model part in length. I must admit the rest of the ship in the drawing now appeared way out of proportion at this point. When I compared the rest of the model (saucer/engineering section) to the enlarged drawing, I was therefore amazed to find it a most accurate match. With

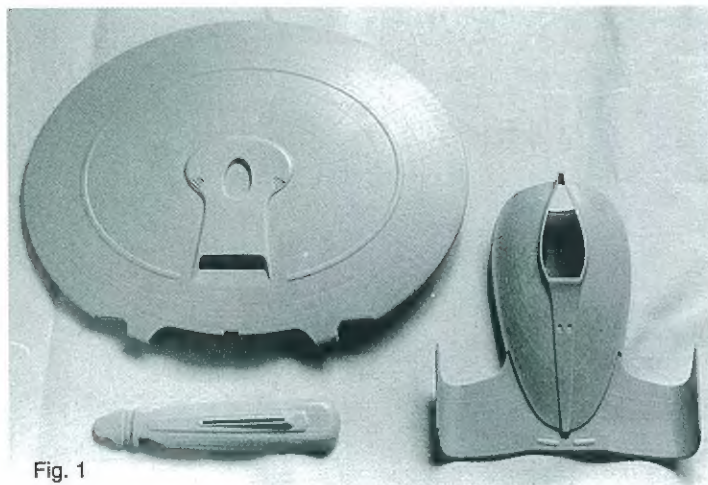


Fig. 1

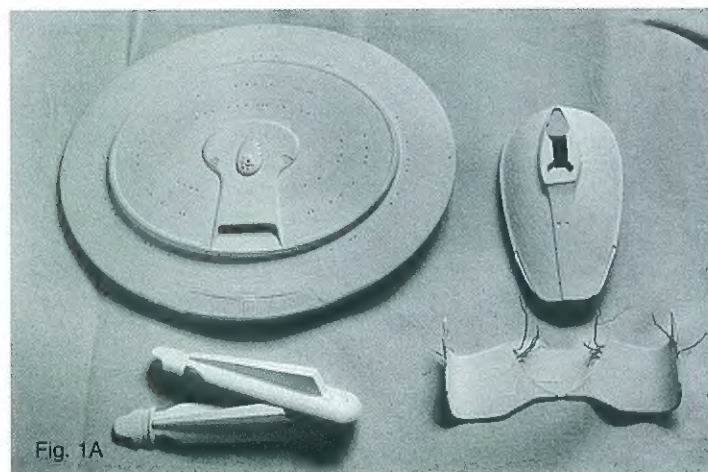


Fig. 1A

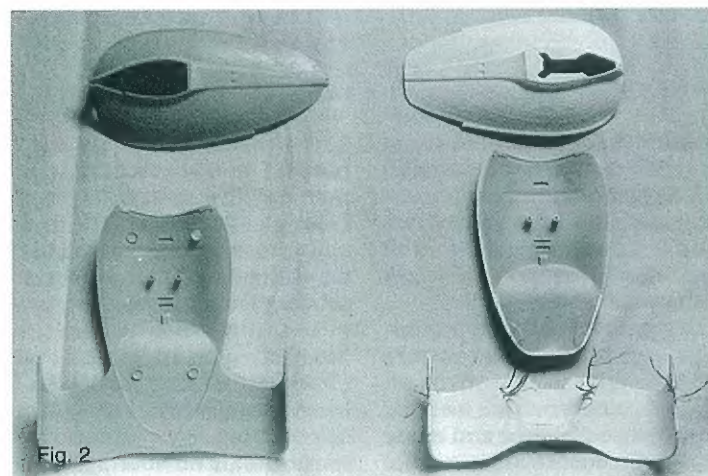


Fig. 2

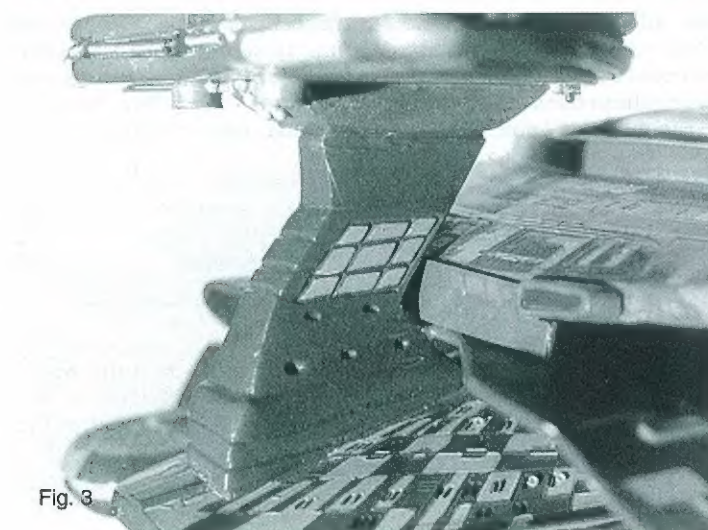


Fig. 3

all of this information in hand I set about modifying the *Enterprise-D* model.

Note—Since I intended to light my model, I decided to build it in four sub-stages: *warp engines* and mounting struts, *engineering*, *upper pylon* and *sensor pod* and *saucer*. The LEDs, fibre optics, wiring, etc., would be added as I went along. Since this article concerns the conversion only, I have omitted detailed lighting plans.

Cutting

This was by far the hardest thing for me to do—not physically but psychologically. I've made a number of models over the years and, up to this point, only carried out what I would describe as "minor modifications". Now I was being asked to make the ultimate sacrifice—take a brand new *Enterprise-D* model and cut it up! I was greatly daunted by uncertainty regarding my abilities coupled with the expense of a wasted *Enterprise* model if I botched it up. Still, I wanted a model of this ship badly, so ahead I boldly went.

I first laid out all the parts that needed to be modified to get a "feel" for their construction and the modifications required (fig. 1). I started with the back end of the *engineering* section because, at the time, it seemed this was where the major cutting needed to be done (I found out later this was not the case). Using a black fine tip felt marker, I marked out on the lower *engineering* model section exactly where I wanted to separate it (diag. 1). I used my modeller's micro drill and 0.05mm bit to drill out a series of holes along the marked cut line. Having done this, I took my small but trusty Swiss Army pocket knife and forced the blade along the holes. In no time I had two pieces with a series of "ridges" (due to the action of the drill). With a scalpel and sharp blade I cut away the ridges and followed with a rough and then fine dry sanding using nos. 97, P320 and 400C sandpapers respectively. I did this to both pieces. I now had the *engineering* section plus the *warp engine(s)*

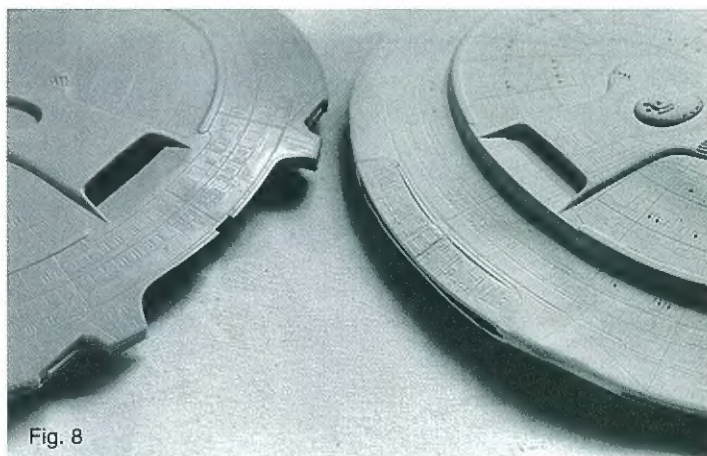
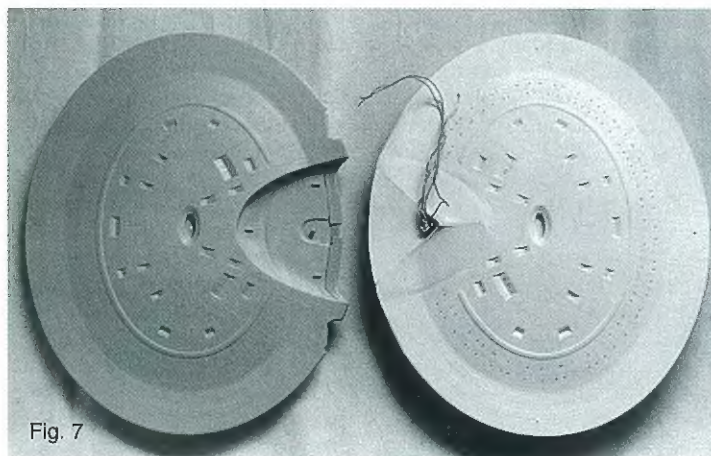
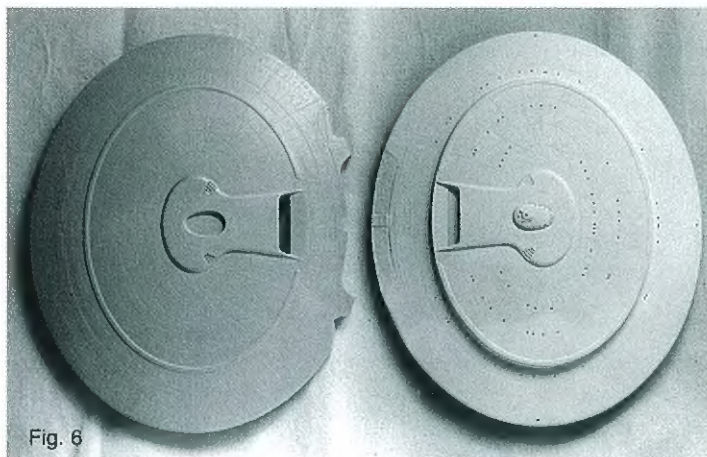
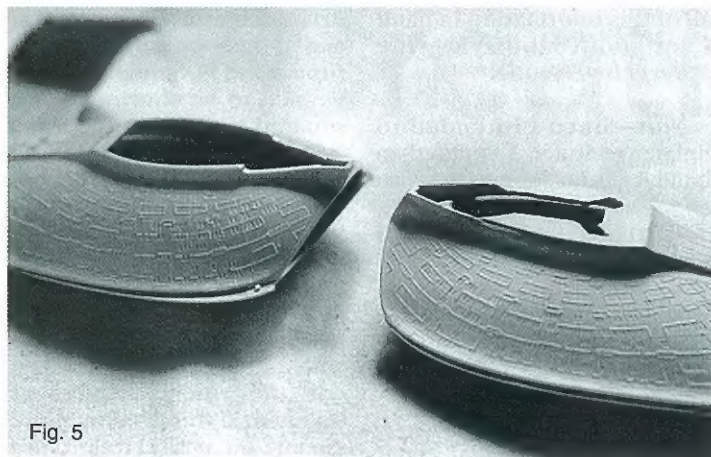
strut attachment (fig. 2). The back end of the *engineering* section (upper and lower model parts) needed to be shortened and squared slightly, so the same "cutting" procedure as before was employed. Returning to the engine mounting struts, it is important to note that these will eventually be mounted upside down. At the central far end the short *phaser* strips needed to be removed (top and bottom), which I achieved with the grinding attachment on my drill followed by more sanding. Eventually I realised this procedure was unnecessary as this section of the model needed to be cut away in a fairly graceful curve. I went back to the video for a longer look at how the complete engine strut needs to be attached to the upper *engineering* section. I found it is mounted between a section of the upper pylon and where the *Enterprise-D* model "neck" fits (most of this part, too, would be cut away—diag. 3). I discovered I had to modify the strut more than anticipated—some of the angles and curves visible in the video were missing from my piece. Since I'd been unable to locate a clear overhead view of this area, I "guesstimated" where the curves had to be in relation to the upper pylon mounting. As before, I started the cut with the drill and finished with the grinding and sanding, and was pleased with the result.

Upper Pylon

Before I could finish the engine mounting struts, it became evident that their mounting position (and subsequent further modification) could not be done accurately until I had some idea of just how large the upper pylon was and precisely where it was to be located (this piece holds the upper sensor in place). I scratchbuilt this part using *Fimo* clay in three sections (lower, middle and upper—fig. 3) *Fimo* can be moulded by hand, cut with a knife, detailed, and, once you're happy with the construction, put into a hot oven for about half an hour until it sets rock hard (It can then be painted). I used my scaled-up photocopy of the line drawing as a template. With the sections

Opposite page: the completed miniature (fig. 9)—note the correct shape and positioning of the sensor pod.

This page (top to bottom): the saucer, hull and nacelles before modifying; the same parts after modification; before and after views of the separation of engineering and warp engine struts—note the shortened aft section of engineering; upper-ptylon detailed with a cocktail stick.



Top left and right: before and after shot of engineering; before and after shot of the upper saucer section—note the filled impulse bays and saucer edge contour. Above left: lower saucer section before and after modification—note the holes drilled for fibre optics and wiring. Below left: diagram 1—severed and filled pylon section. Below right: modified nacelle with aft hole drilled for a 1.8mm LED 'beacon'.

cut, detailed, hardened and cooled I assembled them with *Super Attak* glue. Once dry, I drilled a 2mm vertical hole through the entire piece to accommodate future wiring. *Squadron Green Putty* was used to fill the seams, then sanded. However, the pylon couldn't be located properly on the upper *engineering* section due to this having a raised upper section running down its "spine". This was compensated for by gouging and grinding, out

of the hardened *Fimo*, an appropriately sized groove in the base of the pylon. Now it could be located temporarily in place. At this stage I found further frontal modifications on the *warp* mounting strut would be necessary in order to accommodate the *saucer* section. Back to grinding and sanding of this piece. I also discovered that the upper section of the pylon would need to be higher than in the scaled-up photocopy drawing. In the film, the bottom

of the *sensor* should be about level with the upper section of the main *shuttle bay* door on the *saucer*. A further section was constructed from *Fimo* and attached (diag. 2).

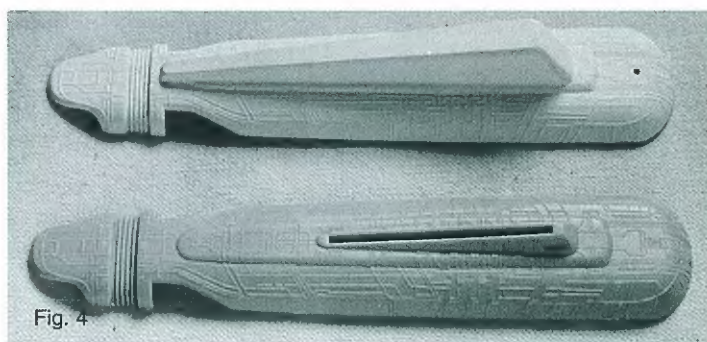
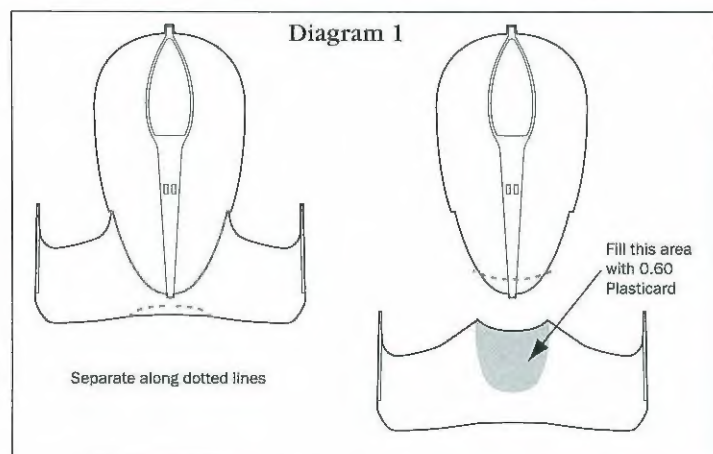
Engine Attachments

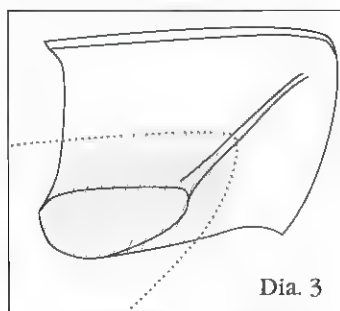
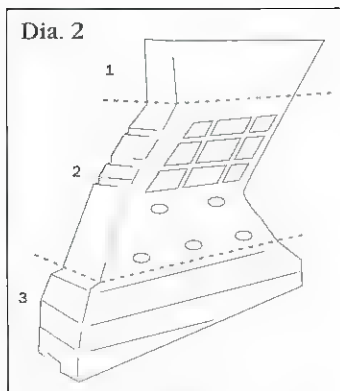
The engine attachments were relatively easy to construct. The attachment area needed to be raised higher and made longer in length than on the existing model *warp engine* piece (fig. 4). Using 0.60 *plasticard*, I cut two triangular shaped pieces of the length required and glued them to the sides of the existing mount. I then fashioned

and attached a top and end piece, filled the seams with putty and dry sanded the piece. I also slightly rounded the back end corners so as to remove the squareness of them. I repeated this for the second *warp engine*.

Saucer Attachment Area (Engineering Section)

From the image (fig. 5), a small "dip" on the upper engineering section can be seen. This is where the neck piece of the *Galaxy class* model would slot into. However, this neck piece isn't used on a *Nebula class* ship and I therefore decided to make the attachment area





level. This was accomplished by using two very narrow strips of 0.60 *plasticard* glued in place. Seams were filled and sanded as usual. It is important to note that the frontal area (where the *photon torpedo launcher* is located) will have to be reworked slightly with modeller's putty. This accomplished, I drilled a shallow indentation to represent the new *torpedo launcher* (I don't know if this class of ship has a *launcher* at this location, but, as I had limited specs and no blueprints to follow, I decided to take a few liberties). Again using 0.60 *plasticard*, I attached a level base which was cut open to allow the wiring for the eventual lighting of the model. It is on this base that the *saucer* will eventually rest.

Saucer (upper)

After several viewings of the ship in *Generations* I realised the inner section of the upper *saucer* needs to be raised. It was here that I felt I would botch the job. Still, things had gone quite well up to this point and my confidence was growing fast. Using the outer edge of the (upper) *saucer phaser strip* as my guide, I drilled a series of holes (many, many 0.05 mm holes) around the strip, including behind the main *shuttle bay*, following the natural curve of the model. Once this was done I again used my small knife to cut through the holes. I then removed the inner section. This was truly a sad sight! Even the *Borg* hadn't sliced out such a large section of the *saucer*. I set

about grinding away the "bumps" left by the drill and followed with a rough and fine sanding. I measured the diameter of the now gaping hole and cut an appropriate length of 0.60 *plasticard* of 1/4" width. This strip was then attached to the inside of the hole in the *saucer* section against its inner wall and secured with *Super Attak*. I filled all the seams from the inside with putty and, once dry, painted it matt black so as not to let any light through when lighting was installed. I then attached the top cut out section to the upper section of the exposed strip. I must have got lucky because it was a perfect fit and required no further modification. I then filled these seams from the inside, and, once dry, sanded generously with fine sandpaper and repeated the matt black painting. A few small seams on the outside needed a further filling and were treated in the usual manner (fig. 6).

Saucer (lower)

The lower section of the *saucer* didn't need as radical a modification as the top, but I realised, in order to do what was necessary, the two *saucer* halves would have to be attached... *permanently!* This meant I had to fit the lighting sooner than I would have wished. I therefore drilled the holes for the fibre optics, fitted a fluorescent lamp, and added all the LEDs. Once complete, I attached the two *saucer* halves with *Super Attak* and left them overnight to dry with several clamps holding everything together. To fill the indentation in the lower *saucer* section (fig. 7), the neck area of the model (what is referred to as the upper *engineering* section in the *Enterprise-D* model instruction sheet) will have to be assembled. However, once this is done, most of it will then have to be cut away. The top section of the neck is needed to complete the contour on the upper *saucer* section while the rest fills (most) of the lower *saucer*. No matter how hard you try, a large hole will always remain in the lower *saucer* section. I've used this to accommodate all of the wiring connections. The remains of the hole were treated with 0.60 *plasticard* to which a small, level base, made from *Das Pronto* clay, was attached. At this stage the *impulse* bays will need to be filled in (fig. 8). I used the *impulse engine* pieces from the kit glued in place and the

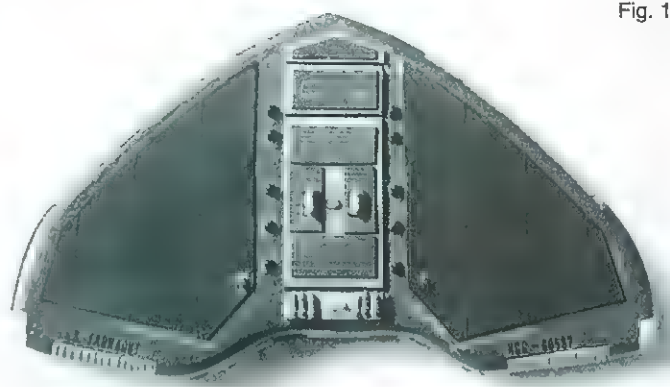


Fig. 10



Fig. 11

Top left: diagram 2—upper pylon is built from three scratchbuilt sections; diagram 3—shaded section of neck is discarded.
Top right: Sensor pod with LEDs installed, resistors used as detailing.
Above: aft view—note the placement of the impulse engines and nacelle mounting struts.
Below: the intricate saucer paint scheme.

remaining gaps were filled with putty, again keeping to the outer contour of the *saucer*. This was followed by sanding, more putty and a further fine sanding. Images of the *Farragut* don't show any *impulse engines* but I was certain this class of ship had them so I added two more (from my spares box) about two inches further in.

Upper Sensor Pod

For me, this was probably the most difficult piece to construct

as, initially, I had no idea of its true shape or detailing, and the fly-by in the video only gives a limited, two-dimensional view. However, shortly after making several unsuccessful attempts, the schematics for the *Farragut* were published in the *Star Trek Fact Files* and it was these I based the *sensor pod* shape on. Again, I first enlarged the schematic via the photocopier to get the scale I desired, using its position and distance between the rear of the *warp engines* as

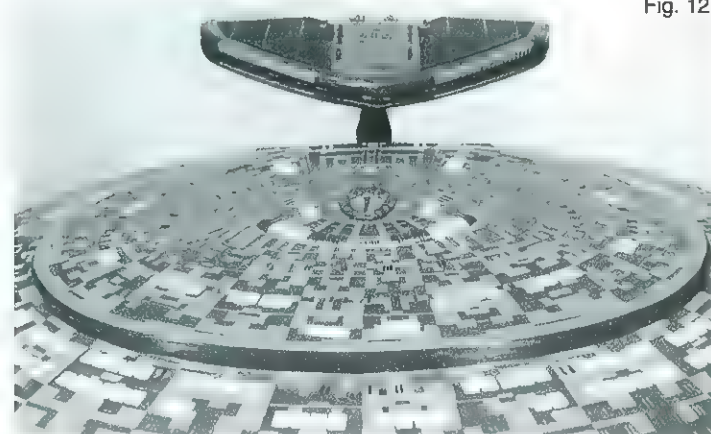


Fig. 12



my guide (fig. 9). Once done, I laid this template on a 5/8" thick piece of *Das Pronto* (white), a type of air drying modelling clay, and cut the shape out using my army knife. I used the stick end of a no.

2/0 paintbrush pressed 1/4" into the still-soft sides of the *pod* going all the way around, except for the back corner sections, where what appear to be RCS thrusters are located. I then set it aside to dry, which took

five days due to the thickness of the piece. Once solid, I set about sanding it (rough followed by fine), turning the angular cuts made by the knife into gentle contours as well as cleaning up the side impressions. I needed small amounts of filler putty here and there and treated it as usual. Once complete, I drilled a 3mm hole through the centre of the entire piece for wiring and an LED beacon. By this time my birthday had occurred and I received the *Star Trek Next Generation 10th anniversary* book, containing many previously unpublished photos from the TV series, including an excellently detailed image of the *sensor pod* of the *Farragut*. I used this as a guide, cut the varying surface detail shapes from 0.30 *plasticard* and secured them with *Super Attak* (fig. 10). For the small "nodule" details I used 1.8mm LEDs with the stems cut off and painted black. For the longer detailed pieces I used ceramic resistors with their stems removed. I also placed these strategically along the inside of the side depressions. All were secured with superglue. Into the aft depression of the *pod* I glued some short sections of a bass guitar string (lower "E"—fig. 11), to simulate coil-like detailing. For the ribbing on the upper surface *plasticard* I used the long, string-like *Letraset* (between 1/16" and 1/32" in width) as I knew I would never be able to cut *plasticard* to the extremely narrow width I wanted. I detailed both the top and bottom of the *sensor pod* in the same manner and, once complete, it looked most accurate.

Putting it all together

Having constructed the model in subsections all that was now required was to fit the sections in place. All the colour coded wiring was added as I went along and once each subsection was near completion it was test fitted for accuracy. Any problems found were corrected immediately and then the subsection was painted. This was necessary as there are areas of the model that are impossible to paint or detail once it's all together. I first secured the upper pylon to the upper *engineering* section. I then attached the *warp engine*

struts (with engines) to the flat base created on the neck area of the upper *engineering* section and also butted up against the upper pylon. (All attachments were made with *Quick Drying Super Araldite*—a permanent bonding material comprising a resin plus a hardener; when mixed a chemical reaction causes them to become active... and super strong!) This was then left overnight to cure. The following day I attached the *saucer* section, with its shallow base (1/4" thick) made of clay, to the *plasticard* base on the upper *engineering* section and left it for another day to cure. Lastly, I added the upper *sensor*. The whole model rests on the stand that came with the *Enterprise-D* kit, but I find it unattractive and am in the process of redesigning a more aesthetic-looking one. The model is too heavy for the brass tube type of stand due to all the wiring and lighting inside it. When the room lights are off and the model power is turned on, the sight is impressive. It took me about six months to make this model and it has given me a lot of confidence to try others of a similar nature. I would encourage readers to set themselves a challenge and go out and meet it head-on!

I painted my *Farragut* in colours other than those of the *Federation*. I wanted a starship which looked somewhat more aggressive in colour and so chose to paint its primary colour *Hurricane Gray*, a car paint made by *Rover*. The aztec pattern is *Humbrol* #109 (WW1 Blue) and the lifeboats are *Humbrol* #28 (Camouflage Gray) (fig. 12). The *deflector shield* is *Mazda* electric blue and ochre, much the same as the *Galaxy* class starships. Thruster detailing on the *sensor pod* is yellow, with all other *pod* details being varying shades of paler *Humbrol* gray paints. A few red LEDs (non-lit) were added for effect. Some decals were added from the original model kit, but I'm awaiting the bulk of them from *Thomas Models*. Once all the decals are added, the entire model will be sprayed with a protective matt finish.

Top: 3/4 upper and front view of the finished USS Farragut.

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When styrene ruled the Earth

A talk with Aurora kit designer Dave Cockrum

anthony taylor



When Aurora closed its doors in 1977 an era ended in figure model kits. The company had long been known for producing models of quirky subjects and had been a major factor in spawning the monster craze of the 1960s with the release of their Universal monster kits series. Through the '60s and '70s they continued to produce kits based on comics, movies, and TV shows, with varying degrees of success.

To gain some insight into the creative process at Aurora I spoke with veteran comic book artist Dave Cockrum, who designed kits for the company in the early 1970s. More recently, Cockrum has designed action figures for many companies, including *X-Force* figures for *Toybiz*. Cockrum, whose work runs the gamut from *Superboy* and the *Legion of Superheroes* for DC to *X-Men* for *Marvel Comics*, made it clear that while he was happy with the kits that were produced from his designs, he felt his best work for the company had never been produced. This interview will show *Aurora* fans what they missed.

Anthony Taylor: How did you get started with *Aurora*?

Dave Cockrum: A friend of mine was a good friend of Andy Yanchus, who was a project manager at *Aurora*. The three of us all turned up at one of Phil Seuling's big comic cons in New York in 1972 when I was pencilling the *Legion of Superheroes* for DC. Andy had a table selling old

Aurora kits (for scandalously low prices) and my friend introduced us. He liked my work and we started talking, and after a while he asked if I would be interested in designing model kits. I was, as I had built models all my life.

He invited me to come out to Long Island and meet with the people at *Aurora*. They had just decided to add a *Tyrannosaurus Rex* to their *Prehistoric Scenes*, so I went home and did a three view drawing of a T-Rex. They looked at it; they bought it.

AT: Was that the only kit you designed for the prehistoric line?

DC: No, I also did a stegasaurus in the same scale and it was humongous. It was the first dinosaur in the line that wasn't a straight ahead static pose—it was reacting to a danger off of its rear right quarter, its head was turning back around and the tail was swinging. The pattern was actually made, but the kit was never produced. The pattern disappeared

before *Aurora* was sold to *Monogram*—somebody stole a whole bunch of patterns from the vault. I was supposed to get a few as gifts, the *Monsters of The Movies Creature* and *Rhodan*, but they were taken before I got them.

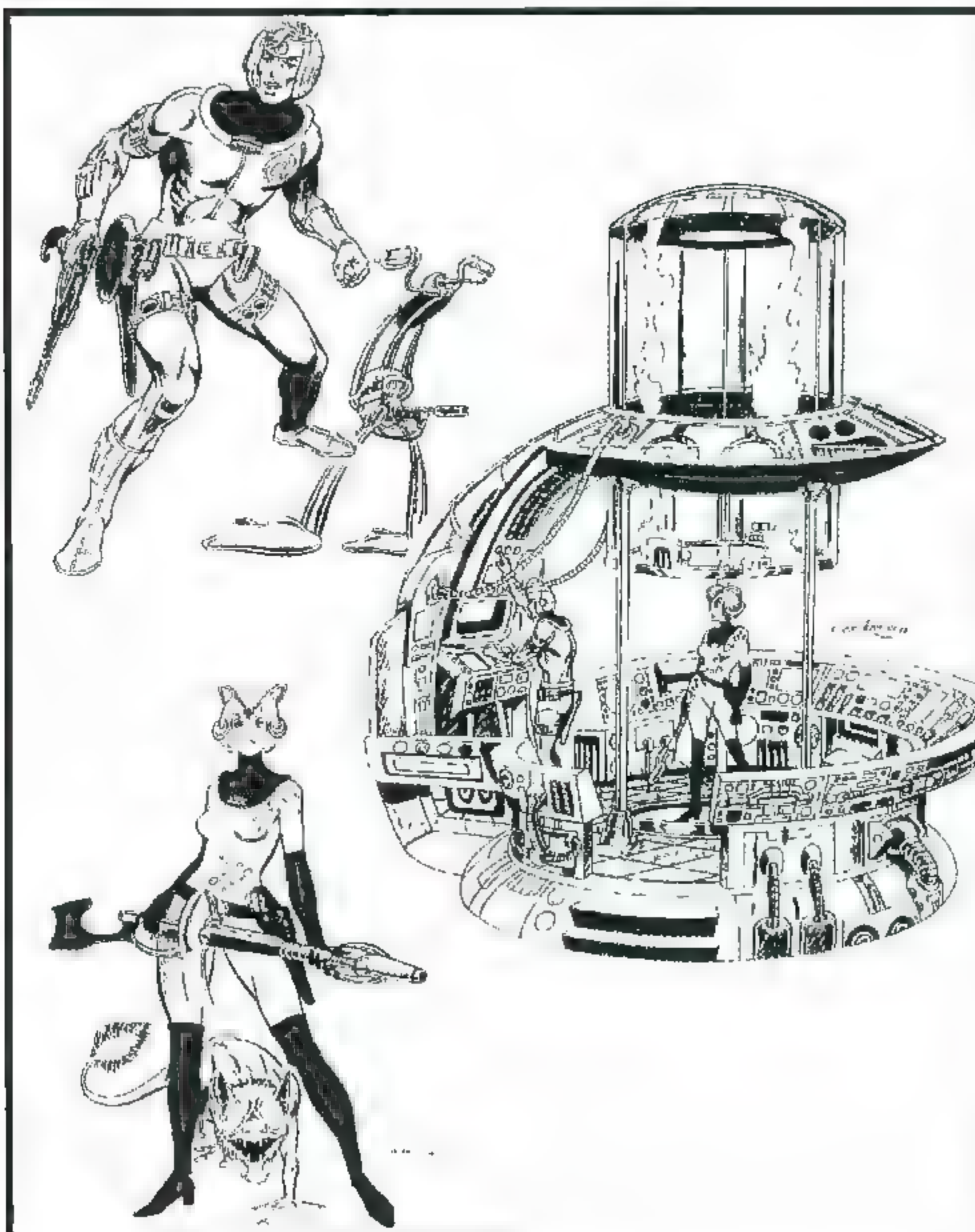
AT: What did you work on after the dinosaurs?

DC: I did a set of science fiction characters and a time machine that would link them to the *Prehistoric Scenes* line. It never got off the paper, but they liked it. It might have been a little too ambitious for them at the time. I got involved with the *Comic Scenes* line and it turned out to be all re-issues, although I had conceived several new figures. I did a *Phantom* kit (this design has since been produced in resin by *Action Hobbies* of Louisville, Ky.) and fellow DC artist Dick Giordano designed a *Flash Gordon* and *Ming* kit. It was really a beautiful sculpture; the two of them were dueling with swords and *Ming* was stepping back and off balance. It was

wonderful. I did the box art for the *Superboy* model and instructions for five or six of the kits. In a way I was involved in all of the kits; some friends and I had formed a company called *Graphic Features* and we were producing all the art for the *Comic Scenes* kits. We hired Dick Giordano, Neal Adams, Gil Kane and others to illustrate the boxes and instructions. Unfortunately, we couldn't agree on projects and the company folded soon after that.

AT: Tell me about the *Monsters of the Movies* designs you did for *Aurora*.

DC: The concept was that they were going to give you alternate heads for all those monsters. You could have the actor's head sticking out of the suit and the monster heads would be a separate piece. That didn't last long, because no one thought that anyone would build the kit with the alternate pieces. So I designed the last *Frankenstein* they did, the one running from off-camera villagers, and the swimming *Creature from the Black Lagoon*. I also did *Rhodan* and *Ghidrah*, the last two kits produced for the line, but there was a mess of other ones that got to the pattern stage. There was the *Metaluna Mutant* (from *This Island Earth*), and *Gort* (from *The Day the Earth Stood Still*). *Gort* was standing on the saucer's

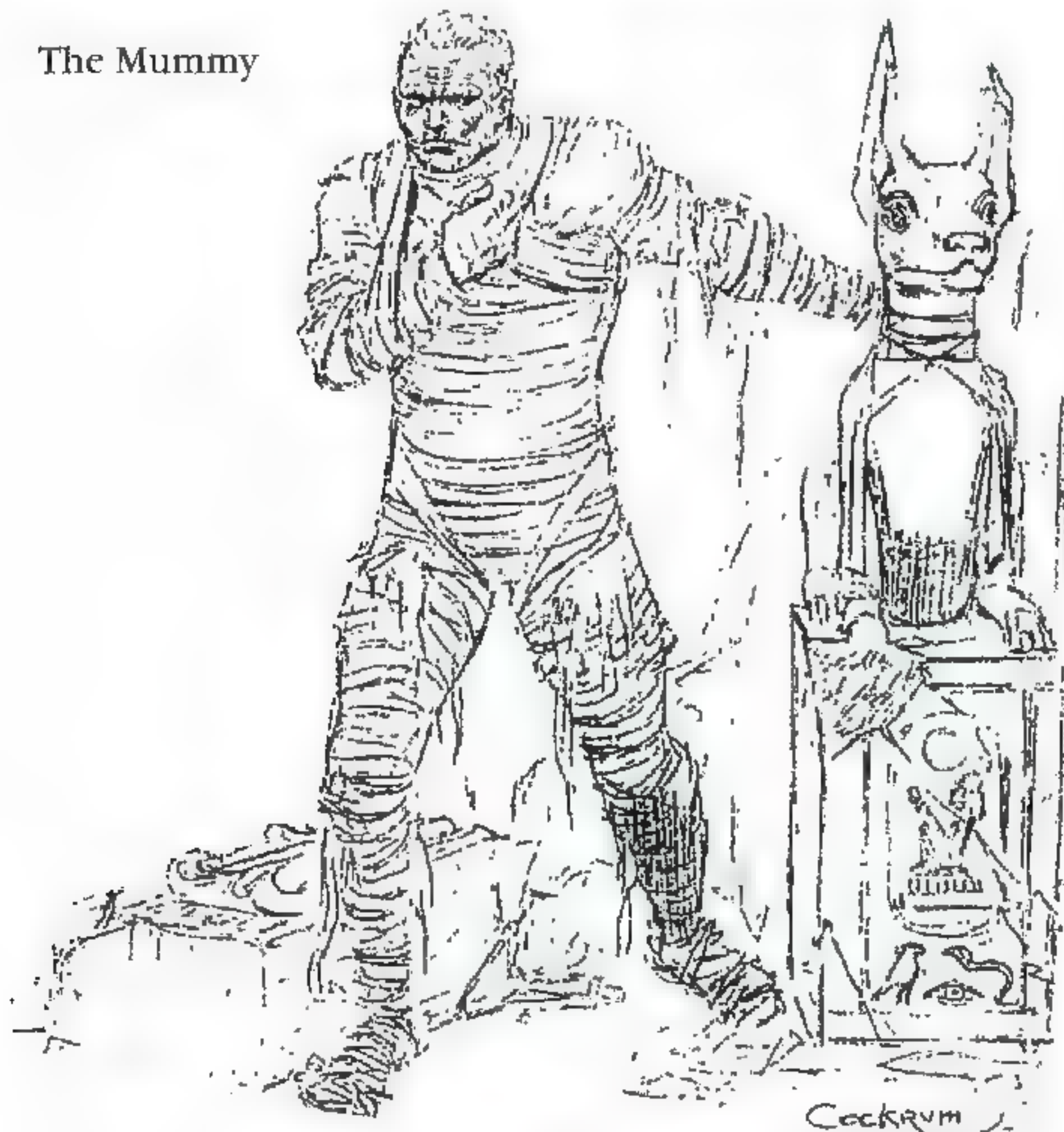


ramp, with a clear red plastic beam melting a rifle in the hands of a kneeling soldier. I did *Godzilla* attacking the Tokyo Tower and that pattern was made.

AT: Who sculpted the kits that you designed for *Aurora*?

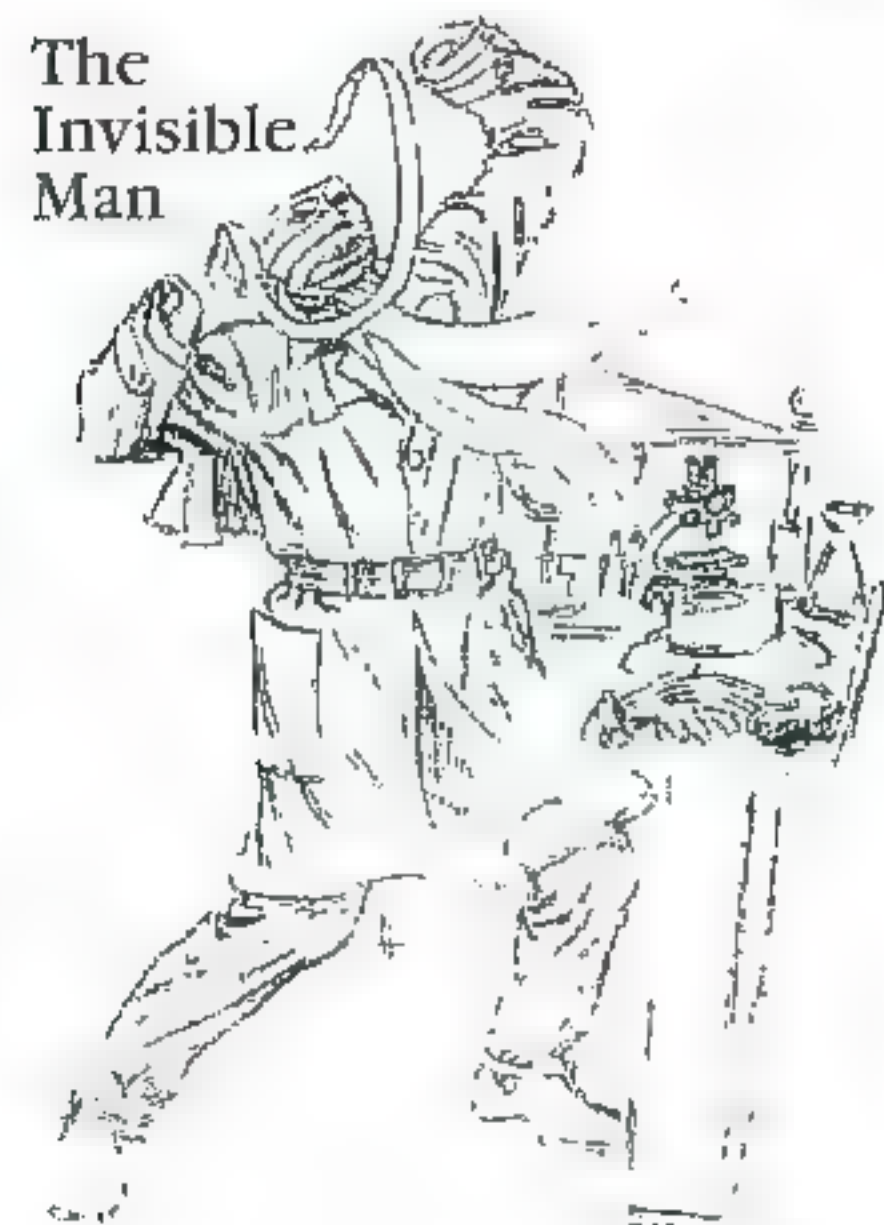
DC: It was one of two guys, Bill Lemon or Ray Meyers. Those were *Aurora*'s two primary sculptors. Bill Lemon, in my opinion, was the best. If Bill Lemon did you a pretty girl, she was pretty. If Ray Meyers did you a pretty girl, she wasn't.

The Mummy

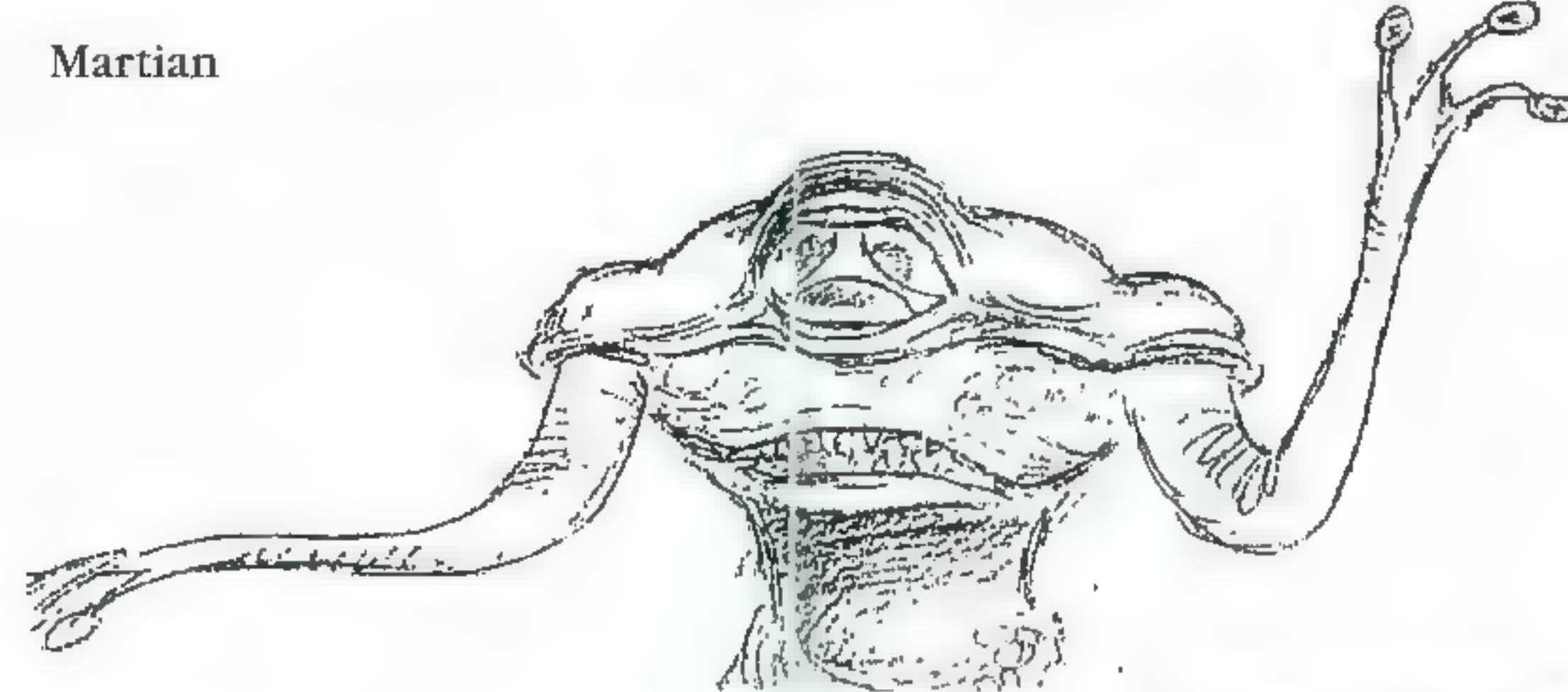


a new *Phantom of the Opera*, for which the pattern was made. He was threatening the girl who had unmasked him. Ray Meyers sculpted her and she was a little long in the face. Fay Wray was finished—we were going to do a *King Kong* in 1:12 scale, big enough to fight the T-Rex I designed for *Prehistoric Scenes*, but that was squelched by the Dino De Laurentis *Kong* movie. *Aurora* backed off because the rights to *Kong* were in question

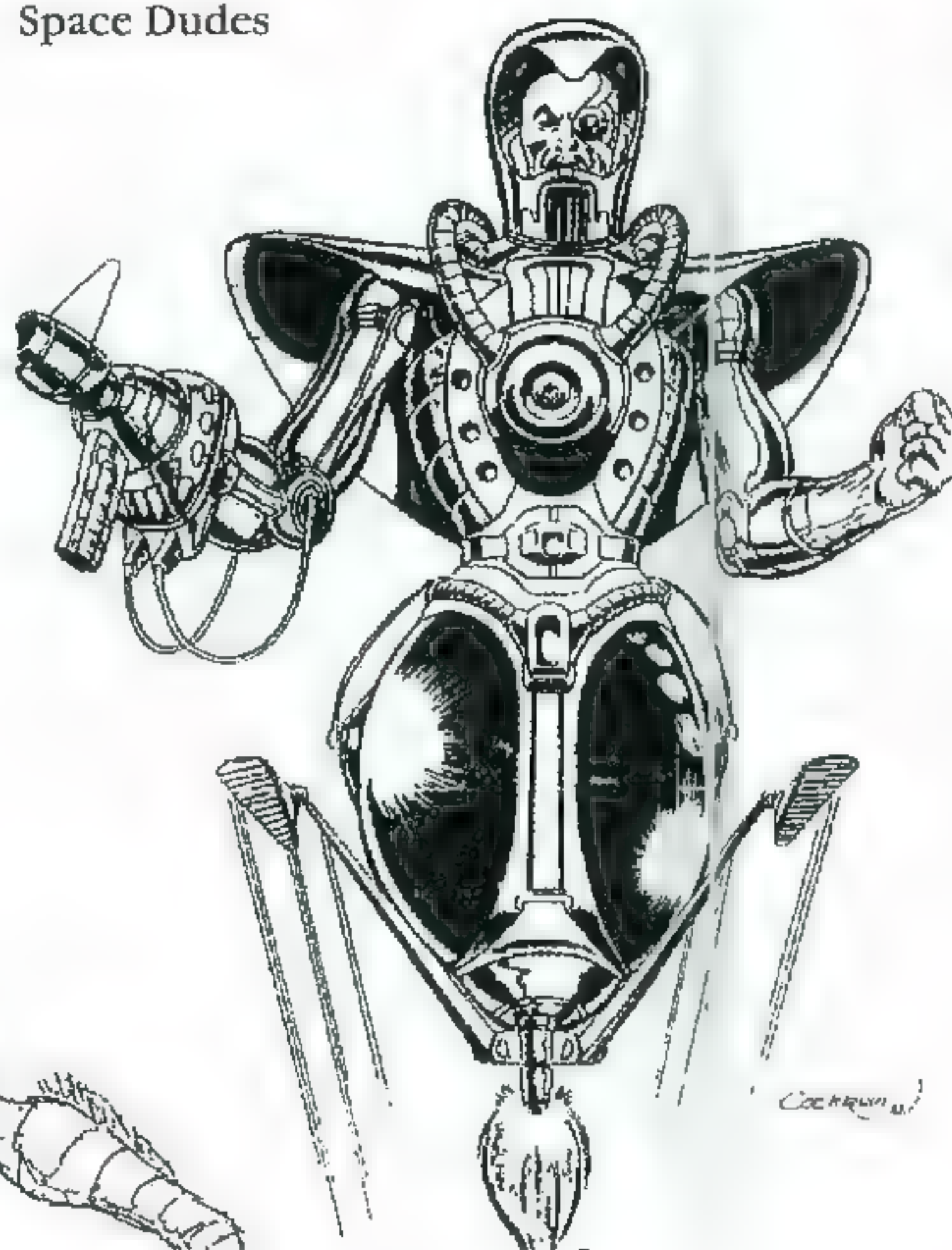
The Invisible Man



Martian



Space Dudes



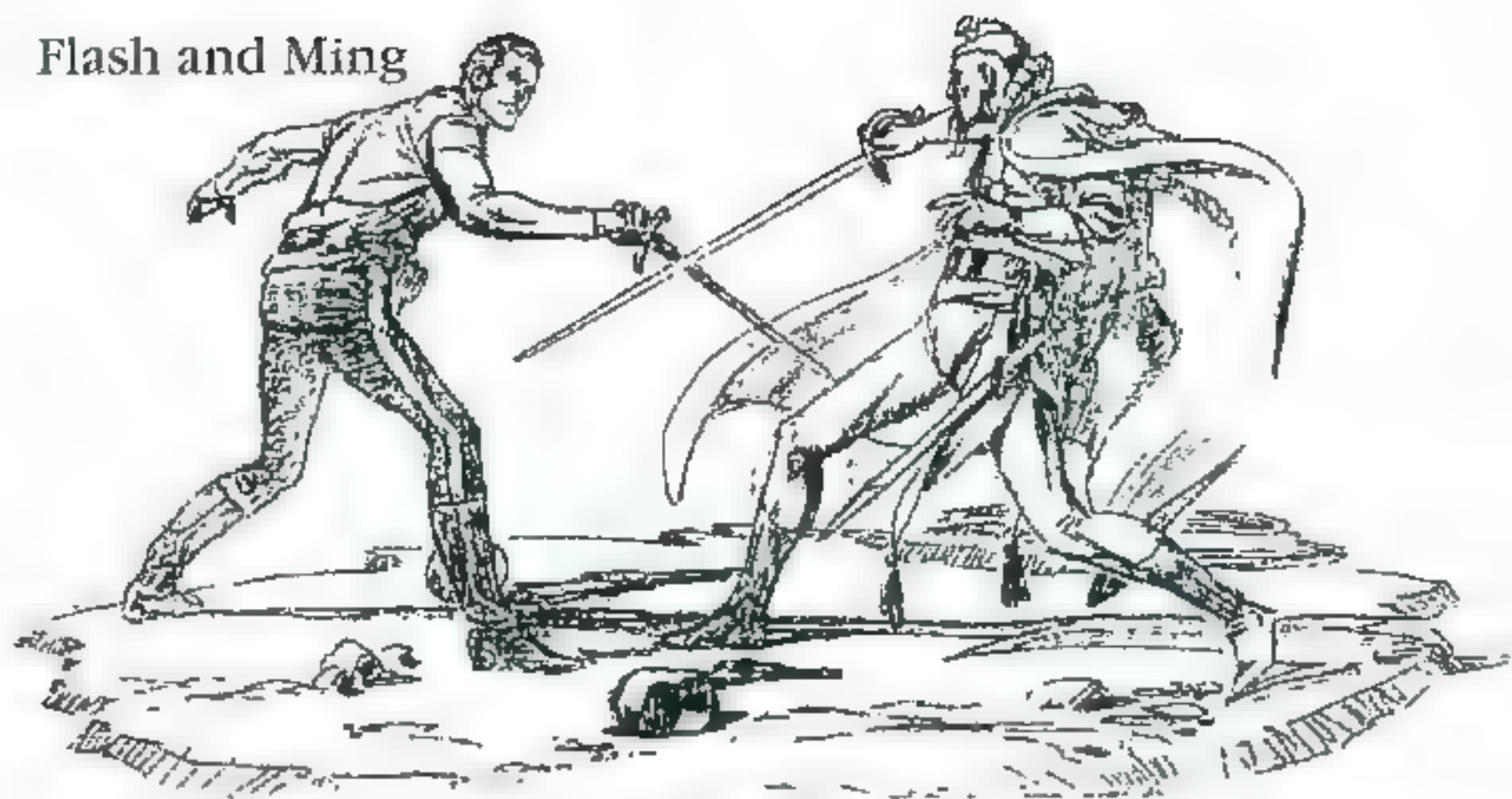
and they couldn't figure out who to deal with. There was a new *Mummy*. *Aurora* was getting a little more ambitious with the *Monsters of the Movies* kits. The *Mummy* was lurching against a statue of Anubis, which was starting to tilt. I don't know whether *The Fly* got to the



The Creature

pattern stage or not, but I designed him. He was smashing equipment in his laboratory. In 1975 for the *Science Fiction Scenes* line (which was never produced) we were going to do a *War of the Worlds* scene with three martian war machines coming down a wrecked street. Also, Andy Yanchus had gone to California and measured and photographed *Robby the Robot* (from *Forbidden Planet*) and they were going to do that. Ray

Flash and Ming



Jupiter II kit from *Lost in Space* in 1975 when *Aurora* re-issued the *Flying Sub*, *Seaview* and *Spindrift*, but it didn't happen. Did you do any drawings for that?

DC: No, but I know the *Jupiter II* was the most requested kit; fans wrote in constantly asking for it. The company brass thought it was a boring design. They were obviously not reading the letters. *Nabisco's* (owners of *Aurora* in the '70s) management didn't understand the market they were in.

AT: How long did you work for *Aurora*?

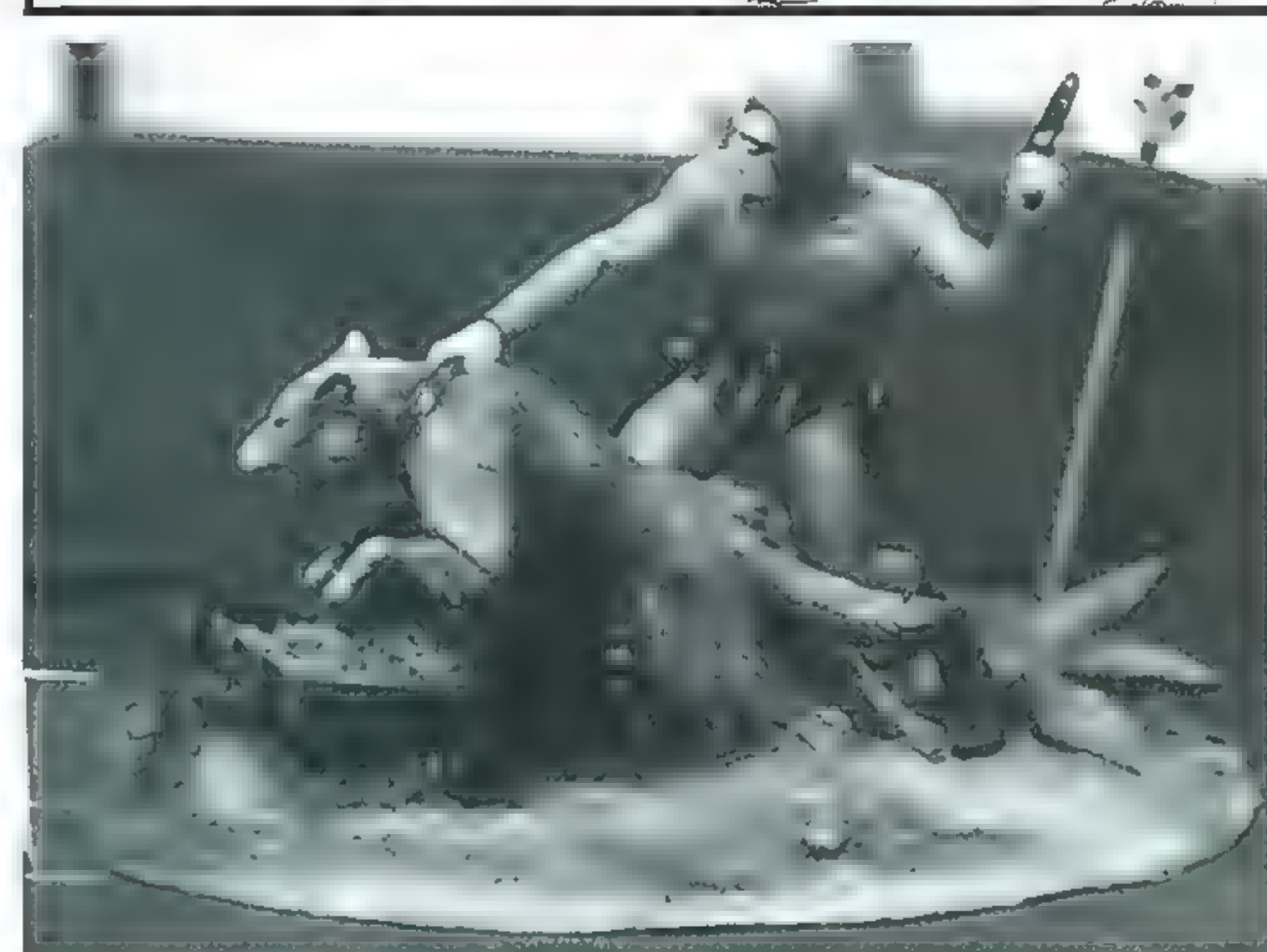
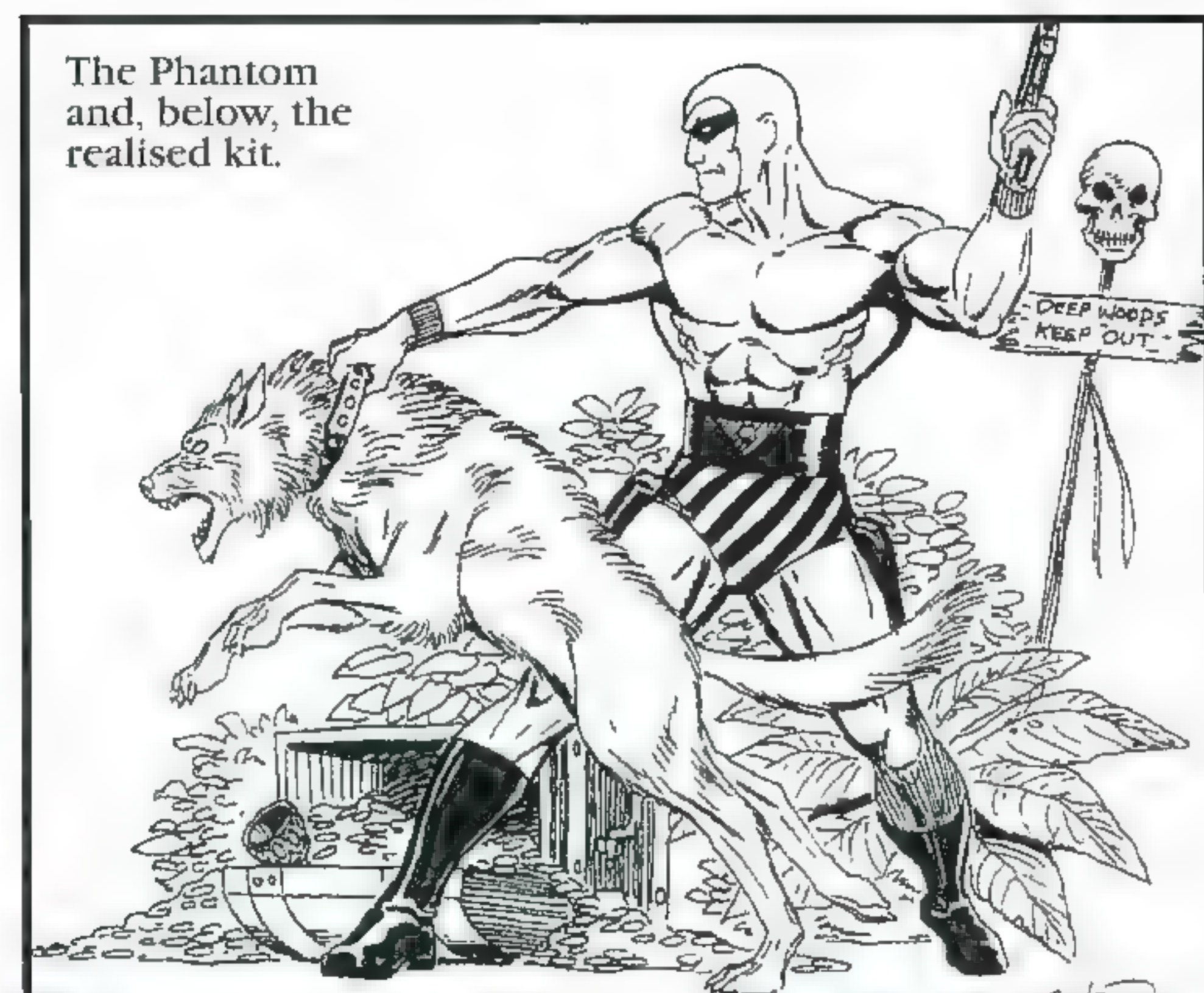
DC: About four years, until 1976. The last thing I did for them was a toy called *KaaaRate Man*. It was two big, bald goons that would beat the heck out of each other. It was kind of like *Rock 'em Sock 'em Robots*, except it was punch 'em chop 'em baldies.

AT: Did you design any kits for

Metaluna Mutant



The Phantom and, below, the realised kit.



other companies?

DC: I did a few things for *MPC* because Mike Myers (of *Aurora*) went over there. The only thing they produced was the *Hulk* kit, which was kind of a dumb model. He was in a pose with his hands directly over his head and they gave you two sets of hands; fists and open-palmed. The idea was that some kid could throw his baseball glove or his radio up there, but I thought it was stupid.

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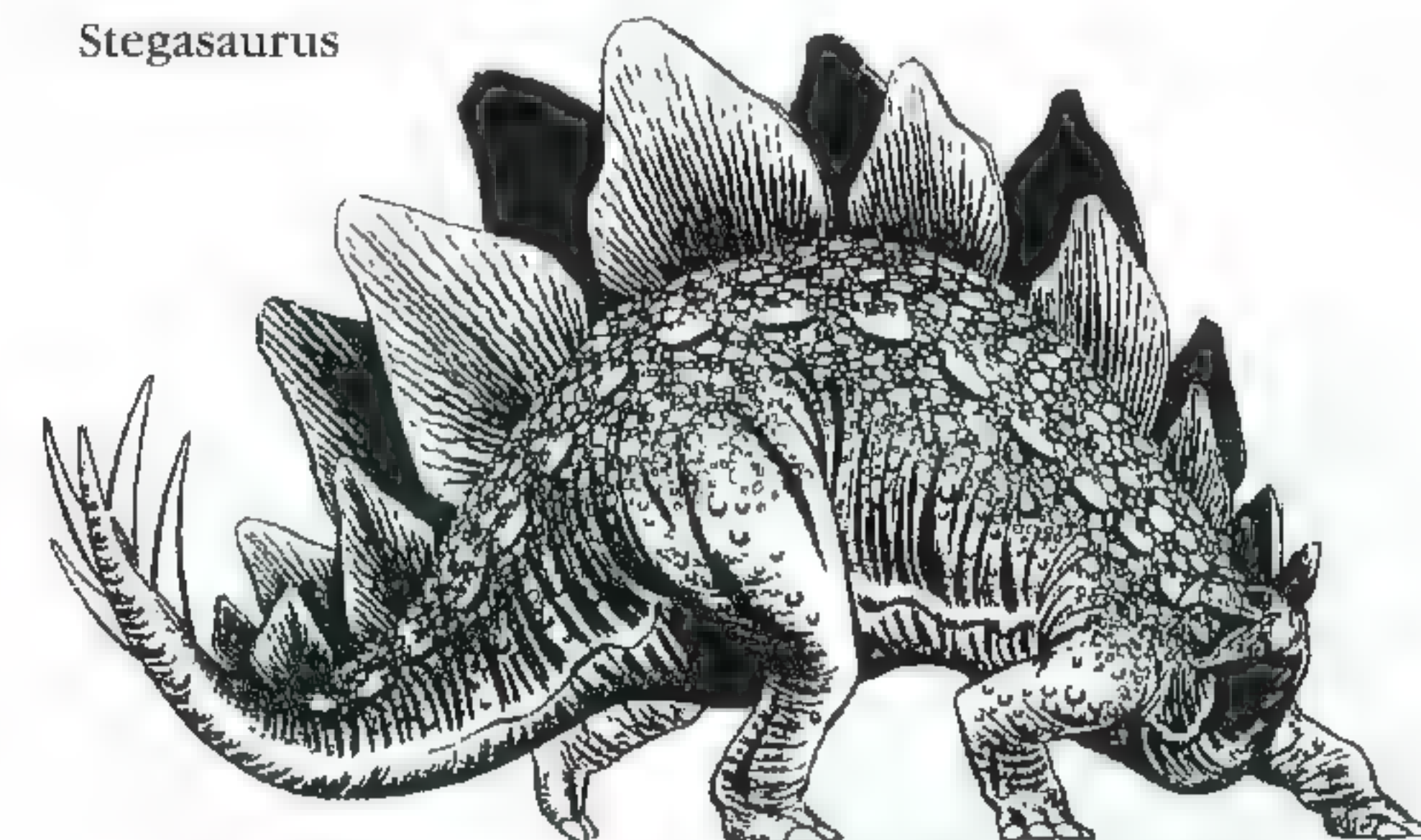
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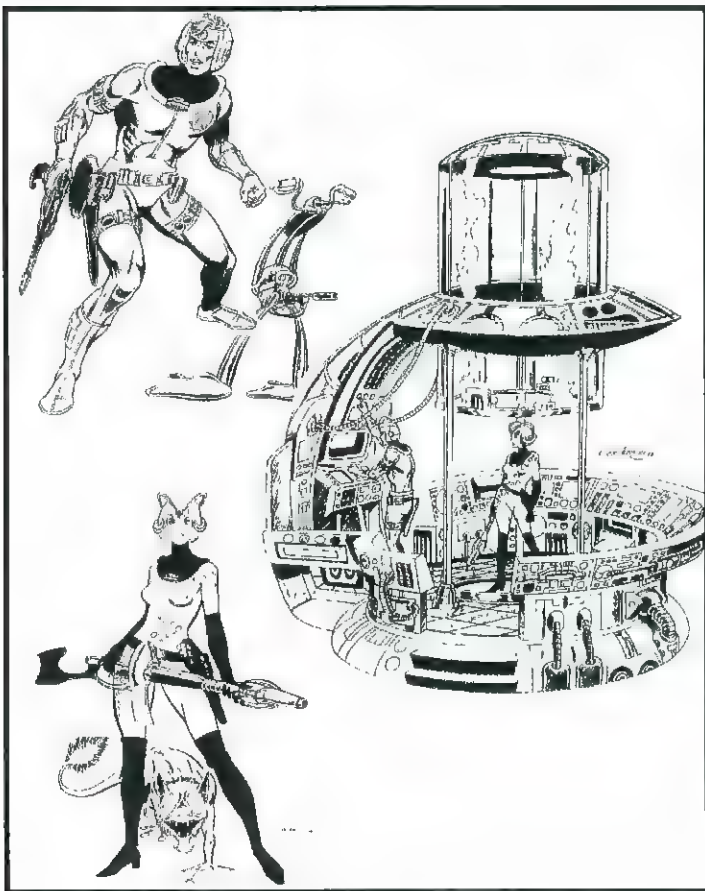
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DC: My pleasure.

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Stegosaur





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Other than that, Ray was fine.

AT: Tell me more about the *Monsters of the Movies* kits you designed?

DC: I did the swimming *Creature from the Black Lagoon*. That was fun. Andy Yanchus called me late one night and asked if I could be there at 8:00 in the morning with a design for the *Creature*. I said, "Hell, yes, I can!" Bill Lemon was on a retainer and they needed a project to keep him busy. Of the kits that were never released, there was

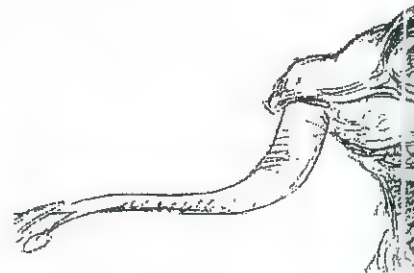
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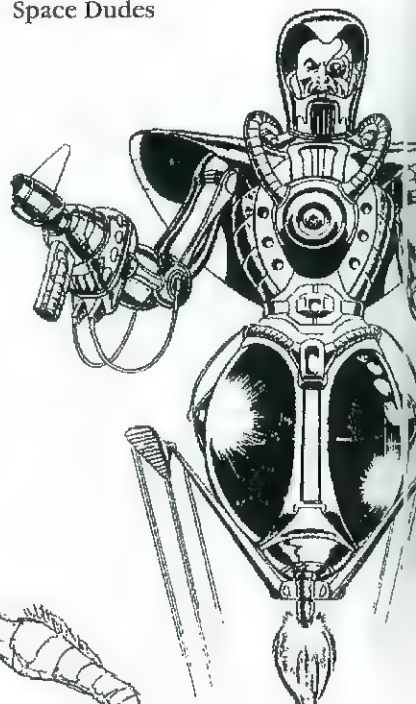
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Martian

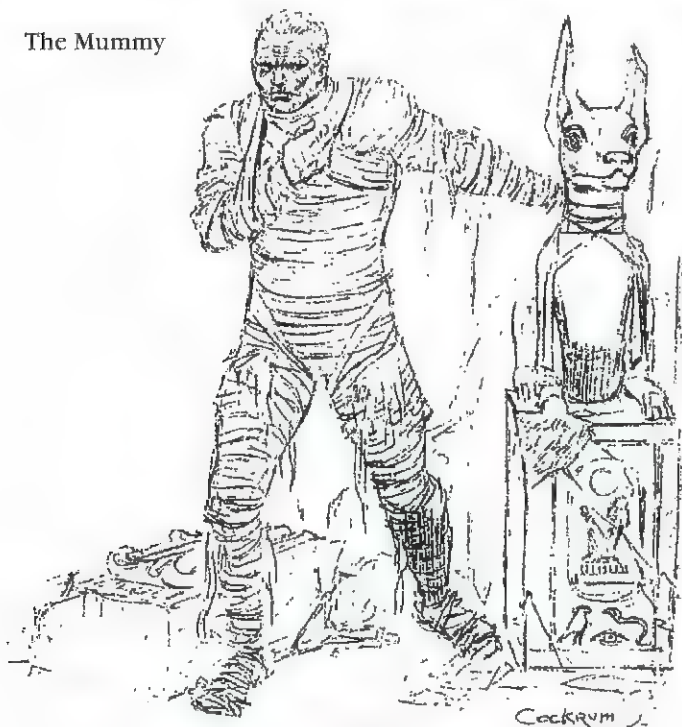


Space Dudes



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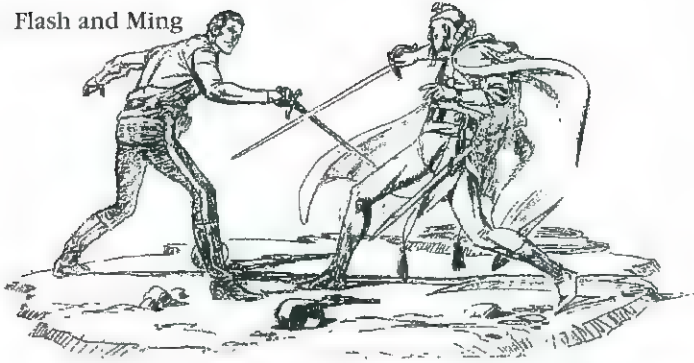
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The Creature

(Cockrum)

Flash and Ming



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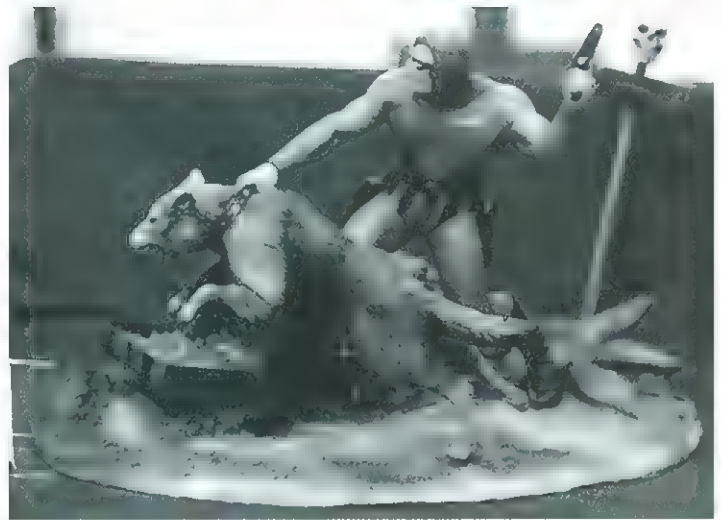
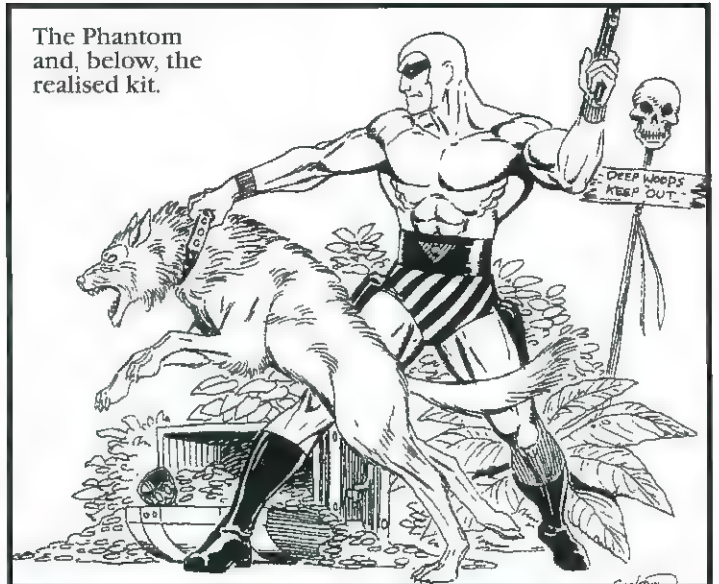
Harryhausen's *Ymir* (from *20 Million Miles to Earth*) was planned but the pattern was never made. They tried to get the rights to Burrough's *John Carter of Mars* and had me drawing up martian people in costumes and martian animals.

AT: Andy Yanchus has said that he tried very hard to get the company to do a

Metaluna Mutant



The Phantom and, below, the realised kit.



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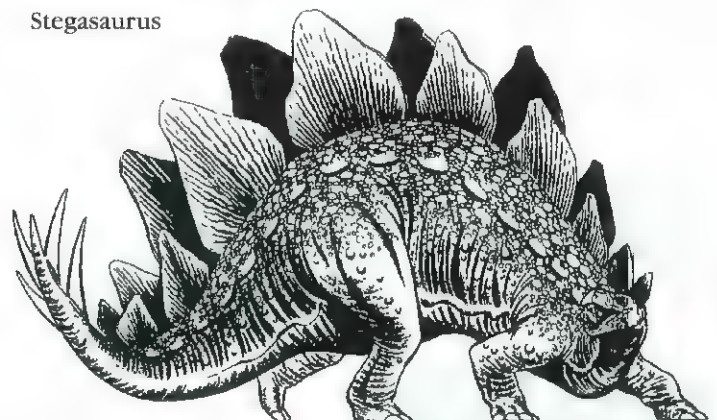
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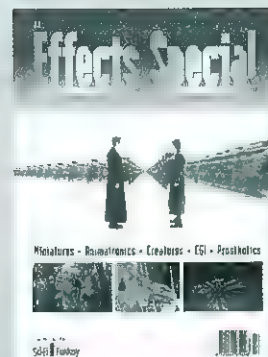


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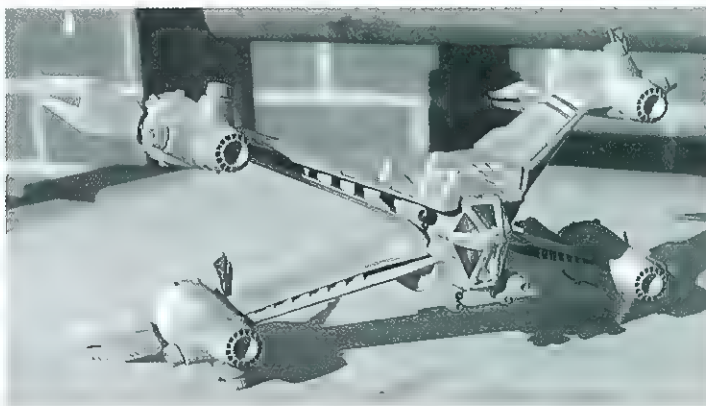
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Starfury Mk 1—kit Mk II ...just how special is the new special edition?

simon roykirk investigates



Why sell something once when you can sell it twice? Cynical as that statement may seem I don't mean it to—the concept is actually a sound, proven and accepted marketing strategy and one that is regularly used by many companies to earn additional profits on products and services that are proving popular. It is, for example, a business approach favoured in recent times by Revell-Monogram, who, following the success of their recent USS Voyager Special Edition kit, have now released a limited edition “upgrade” of their Babylon 5 Starfury.

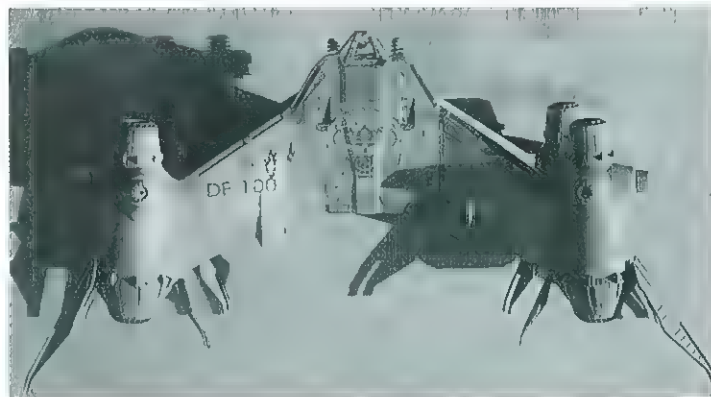
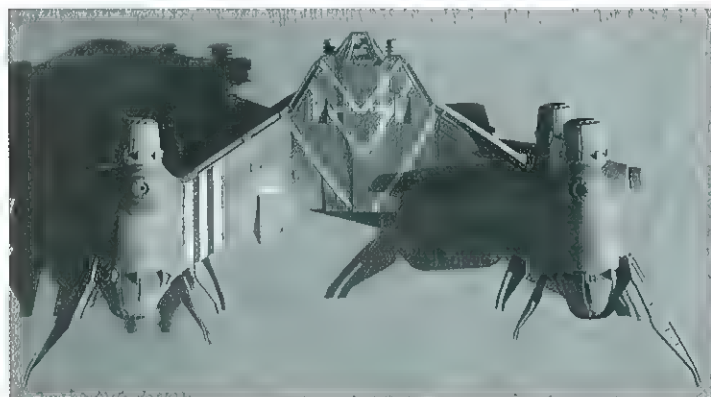
Unlike the *Voyager Special Edition* that included a tiny shuttlecraft and a hangar bay interior to offer the modeller a little more in terms of plastic than its “standard” predecessor had, the *Starfury Mk1 Special Edition* box (excellent new artwork, by the way) contains exactly the same kit as that previously released by the company. The package differs

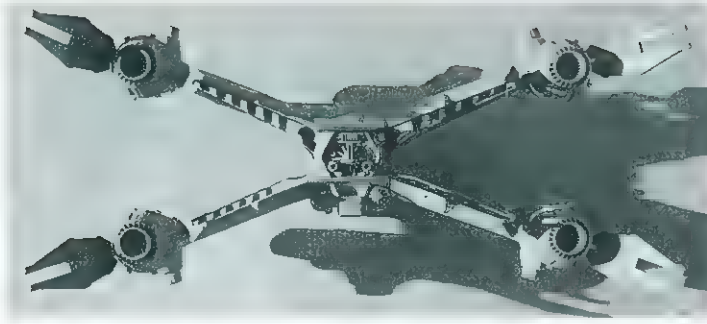
from the original only in terms of “add-ons”—these being a certificate of authenticity signed by J. Michael Straczynski (I can't, in all honesty, make out if this is an actual signature or a print of one); extensive painting and weathering details courtesy of a new, multi-page instruction booklet illustrated with black and white photographs and diagrams; a

large collector's *Starfury* cloissone pin badge, and—representing to my mind the most convincing single argument from a modeller's point of view for buying this version as opposed to the original—a very comprehensive decal sheet supplying colourful “nose art” for several of the most famous craft seen in the series, including *Sinclair's* chevron-

marked fighter, *Sheridan's* “flying tiger” and *Garibaldi's* ill-fated “lizard-stripe” *Fury*. The large sheet also features tiny decals for cockpit interior panels, additional markings for wings and canopy, a *Babylon 5* shield logo for the front of the stand and a new “face” decal for the pilot's helmet that looks suspiciously like that of aforementioned series creator JMS.

Putting aside my annoyance that the dimensions of the kit had not been altered in any way—ie, that the too-fat engines had not now been replaced by correctly proportioned ones (see *Starfury* originator Ron Thornton's comments in issue 28 of this magazine) I decided that, with the help of the new decal sheet, I could complete both





this kit and a standard kit of the *Fury* I had been saving as probably the two most famous versions of the craft seen on screen—namely those piloted by station Commanders *Sinclair* and *Sheridan*.

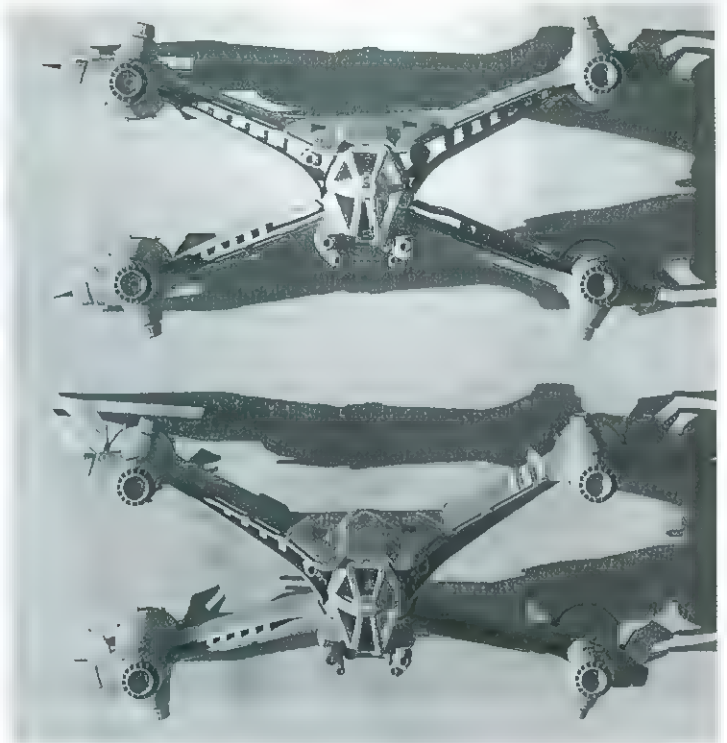
I have to say that the new, expanded instruction booklet is most helpful in allowing the modeller to build a far more authentic-looking replica. Instructions are given for "opening up" the gun barrels—a simple and well-known procedure involving a small drill bit and a bit of finger power that adds a lot of believability to the kit. Thorough details of cockpit interior and pilot colours plus contrasting grey areas on wing leading edges, intakes/exhausts and engine "fins" are also included, plus extensive airbrushing tips allowing you to create a convincing weathering pattern.

After basic assembly and sanding down of any slightly mis-matched mould lines (pay particular attention to the gun parts), I primed both *furies* and gave them an all over spray with a can of *Humbrol* matt light grey. I then picked out the indicated contrast detailing over the base coat with a fine brush. Next, and leaving off the cockpit canopies which were masked and sprayed separately,

I airbrushed dark grey (approximately fifty percent water, fifty percent *Humbrol* acrylic), to represent dirt and panel lines, onto the craft before applying the decals. It should be noted that the main, top decal in each case needs to be cut in two as per the instructions so that it will sit correctly on the *Fury*'s sloping upper wing.

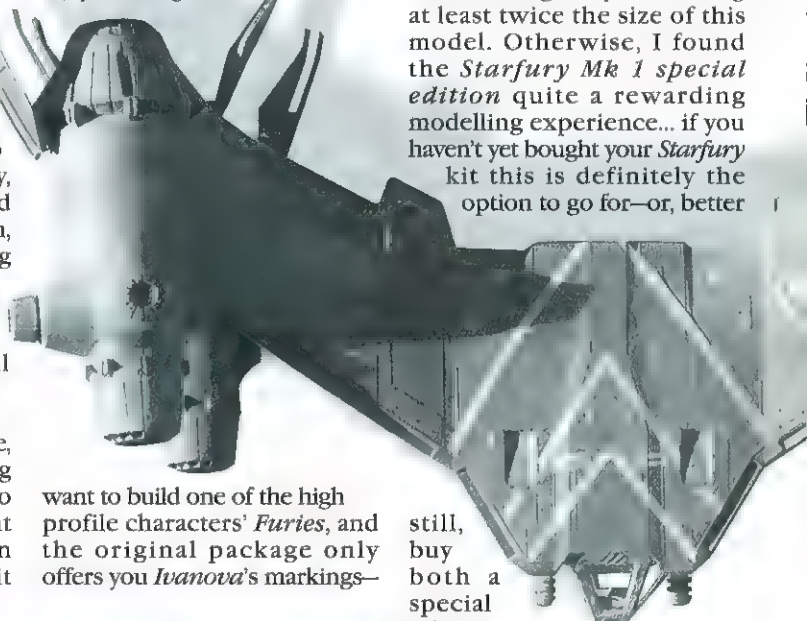
Once the decals were in place and had set (note—as with all *Revell-Monogram* decals you can't, unfortunately, use decal softening and setting solutions) I lightly airbrushed panel lines over the top of them to blend them in with the rest of the craft, then gave the two *Furies* a spray of matt varnish with the airbrush to tie everything together. Finally, the canopies were added and dirtied down with a tiny brush, graphite and some masking tape and final detailing around the engine intakes and exhausts was picked out in matt black with a small brush.

The end results are impressive, with the new decals allowing the serious **B5** modeller to build up an army of different fighters. My only gripes concern the fact that the standard kit



should really have included these additional markings and expanded instructions in the first place (let's face it, you're gonna

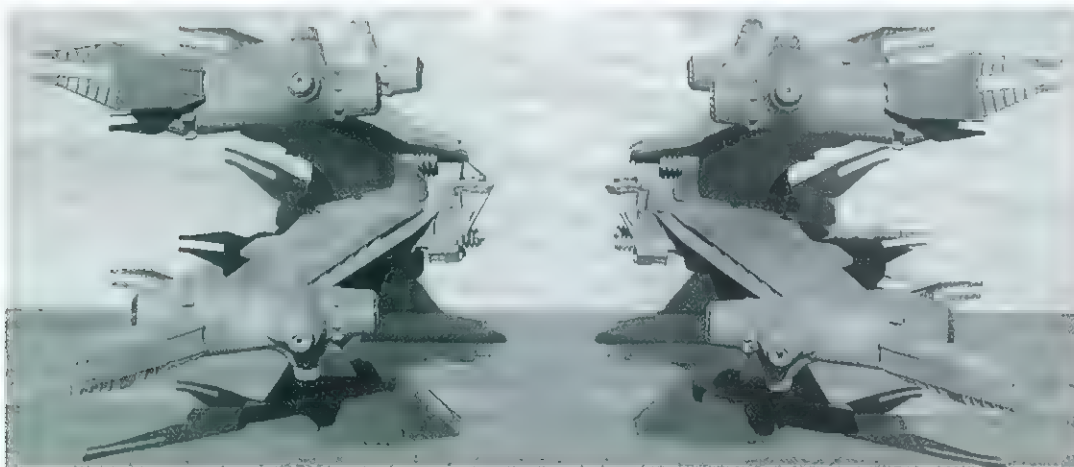
cute though they are—from those flown by the principal cast), and that the *Starfury* kit, good looking as it is, would still benefit greatly from being at least twice the size of this model. Otherwise, I found the *Starfury Mk I special edition* quite a rewarding modelling experience... if you haven't yet bought your *Starfury* kit this is definitely the option to go for—or, better



want to build one of the high profile characters' *Furies*, and the original package only offers you *Ivanova's* markings—

still, buy both a special edition version *and* the standard kit, using a combination of standard and new decals to build *two* famous versions.

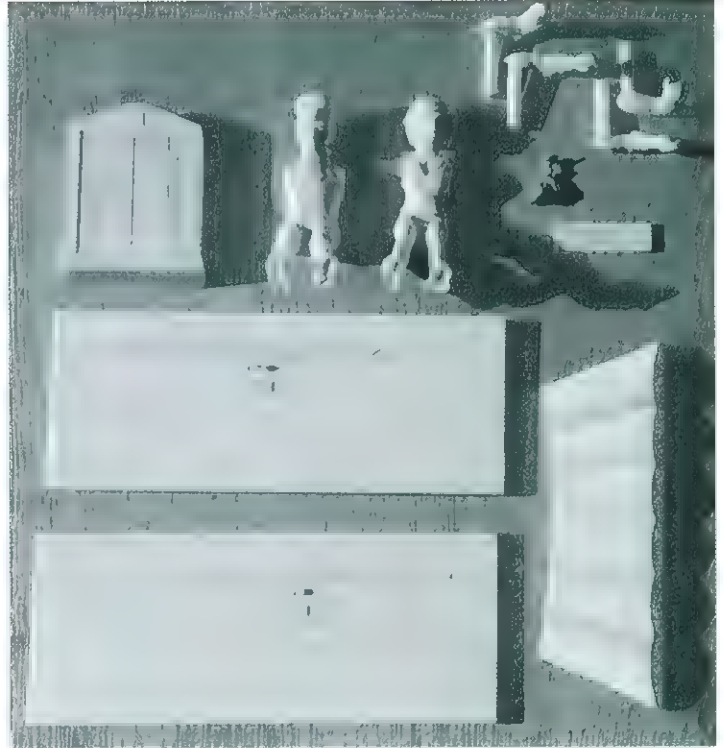
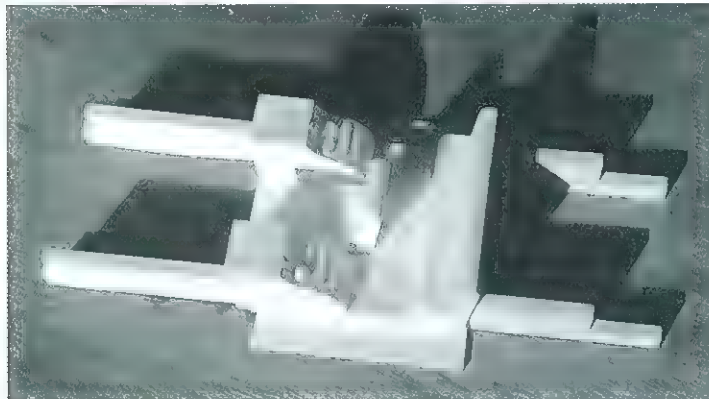
Opposite top—*Sinclair's Starfury*. Bottom—comprehensive markings are provided for both *Sinclair's* and *Sheridan's* fighters. This page: Top—drilled out guns front and rear add scale. Above—*Sinclair Fury* chevron 'nose art'. Opposite—the two commanders go head to head.



That's FAB, A-B!

A review of Lady Penelope's Rolls Royce from AB Models

simon roykirk



I've always wanted to own a Roller, but never thought I'd eventually find myself falling for a nice little number in shocking pink. Before you question my taste in colour schemes allow me to explain, gentle readers. You see, the latest (customary) huge box arrived from AB Models a couple of weeks ago, this one containing an intriguing addition to their growing large-scale Thunderbirds collection in the shape of an eighteen inches long resin and multi media kit of Lady Penelope's legendary six-wheeled Rolls Royce, FAB 1.

AB's garage kit rendition of *Lady P's* classy chassis presents the genre modeller with some seventy five parts in various materials, ranging from a main body, chassis, interior detailing and complete figures in resin, to rubber model-aircraft-type wheels (as used on the series

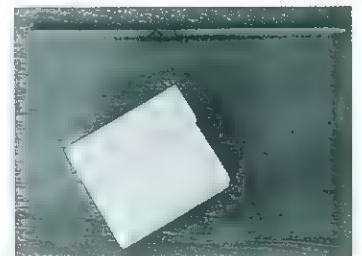
miniatures), brass hubcaps, threaded metal axles, a rigid vacform canopy and tubing from which exhausts, steering column and *Parker's* microphone are made. Six pages of instructions and a cutaway illustration of the car which originally appeared in an issue of the classic 60's comic *TV 21* complete the contents.

The first task is the cutting/sanding away of any excess resin from the underside of the main body back to the "ridge" that denotes the true lower line of the car. The cabin compartment—the dimensions of which are indicated by a slightly raised area on the top

of the vehicle—is blanked off, and therefore requires the removal of the roughly oblong section of resin so that the highly detailed interior can sit up through the resulting hole at final assembly stage. Extraction of the piece is accomplished by drilling a series of holes just within the raised area all along each edge then sawing between these to free the unwanted section of resin. The edges of the hole can then be cleaned up with files and various grades of sandpaper. The final action (for now) on the body is to carefully cut away excess resin from the front and rear wheel arches, which can then be cleaned up and sanded smooth.

Head and tail light positions are marked on the body, with the rectangular areas within these markings needing to be drilled out and cleaned up to accept the resin light cluster inserts included, which are recessed slightly during assembly to provide a lip against which the transparent *plasticard* covers can be glued at final assembly stage.

That distinctive front grille comes as a single resin cast into the top of which a 2.5 diameter hole must be drilled. The tiny white metal "spirit of ecstasy" *Rolls Royce* emblem included then glues into this opening. "Wing mirror plates"—in actuality pre-cut rectangles of *plasticard*—now glue onto the top face of the wing mirrors at either side of the car.



The chassis piece has been deliberately cast oversize to allow for any variations in the thickness of the body casting. This piece therefore has to be test fitted to the underside of the body and any excess resin removed from each edge before assembly. Prior to this, however, 6.5mm diameter holes must be drilled through pre-marked positions on the chassis so that the three threaded axles can be inserted later on. Left and right-hand interior door panels are provided, and at this

The final stage in assembling the interior involves the positioning of *Parker's* central instrument console between the two consoles moulded onto the top face of the chassis and the sanding down of the bottom surface of this piece if required. *Parker* is

point these are test-positioned onto the chassis, offered up into the body and surplus material is trimmed away until they are flush with both body and chassis pieces.

A delicately cast steering wheel comes with the kit, and excess resin is *very* carefully cut away from between the "spokes" of this piece before drilling a shallow 3mm diameter hole into the rear of the central boss to accept the steering column, which is cut from a length of plastic rod. The correct angle for this assembly is determined by test fitting it into the centre console then positioning *Parker* in his seat and adjusting his arms (by removing resin from the shoulders) so that his hands snugly grip the wheel.

Both *Parker* and *Penelope* come as three-piece sub-assemblies comprising of a superb seated figure plus separate arms. Lugs of resin are sawed from the shoulders of each arm leaving the characters to be assembled, primed and painted.

Now for the wheels. First each of the three threaded axles is positioned through one side of each of the three sets of previously drilled holes in the wheel arch supports on the chassis piece. Four nuts are then threaded onto each axle between the arch supports and the other end is pushed through the remaining hole of each set. The axles are lined up so that an equal length protrudes from either side of the chassis and two of the nuts are moved up so that one of them (almost!) rests against the inner wheel arch supports at either side. The third and fourth nuts on each axle are now moved out and tightened against nuts one and

two. Wheel backing discs are added to either end of each axle, these being threaded onto the axle ends until they almost

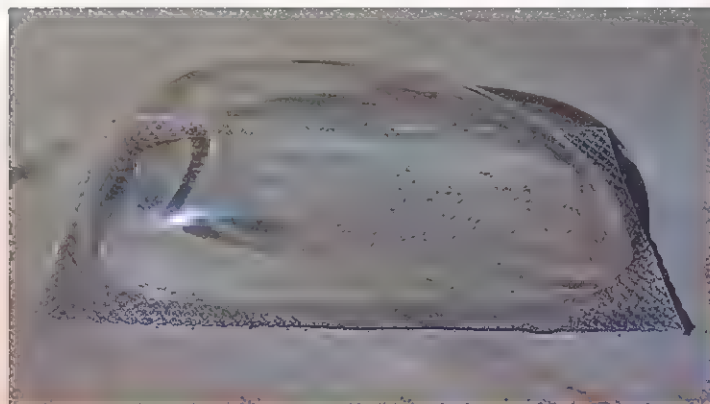
will continue to turn freely once chassis and body have been glued together. The wheel assemblies can now be removed and the chassis and inside of the main body, excluding the cabin area, primed and painted matt black. At this stage the body should be primed and fully painted together with any remaining unpainted interior details.

rest against the outside faces of the wheel arch supports.

The six tyres provided come with plastic centre hubs which need to be carefully removed. *FAB 1's* brass wheel hubs, after first being primed and painted chrome, are then pushed snugly into the resulting openings. The hub/tyre assemblies are subsequently screwed onto the axles and, with a little adjustment of the nuts, you have a chassis with six freely rotating wheels.

The complete chassis with wheel assemblies in place is positioned into the body and any final adjustments made to the chassis to ensure that the wheels

If you can't find a pink that you're happy with at your local hobby store it's worth noting that some auto accessory companies will make up small spray canisters for you at reasonable cost (look in *Yellow Pages* for your nearest *Autopaint* store). The reference for a paint that is very close to that used on the *FAB 1* miniatures in the series is BS 381C 447. Bumpers and grill should be coated with a good quality chrome-finish paint—make sure you buy one that thoroughly dries to the touch—it's best to test-spray a little of your choice of finish onto a piece of scrap material first. *FAB 1's* seats are black with white piping and the car has a red carpet. A strip of wood grain self-adhesive plastic comes with the kit, and this is cut into suitable lengths and added to the tops of the interior door trims for that finishing touch of authenticity



and opulence. Because *FAB 1* is always kept in wax-on, wax-off super condition by *Parker* there is no weathering to do on this model.

Front and rear number plates (the letters *FAB 1* are raised for easy painting) are added to the main body and 1mm holes drilled in the tops of the two aerial mounting positions to accept the aerials which are snipped from lengths of the one millimetre diameter steel rod provided and glued in position.

Clear light covers, cut from a length of transparent *plasticard* that comes with the kit, are glued in place and chassis and body assemblies are glued firmly together. The scalloped dashboard top piece is sanded, primed, painted and added to the front top of the cabin area. Three millimetre holes are drilled in pre-marked positions on the two exhaust pipe support blocks which are then glued to the underside at each side of the rear bumper. The exhaust pipes

themselves are then cut from a length of aluminium tube and inserted into the blocks.

Finally, excess plastic is very carefully trimmed back from the base of the vac-form canopy to the pre-marked line on the plastic and the piece is masked so that the window struts can be spray-painted on. The canopy is subsequently attached using a non-fogging glue and there you have it—*FAB 1* is ready to take to the road.

Conclusions

As with all *AB* kits, *FAB 1* has been carefully thought out and meticulously planned. Casting is of the highest quality, the main body on my review kit being baby's bottom smooth. Instructions are detailed and precise, and the finished model is a jaw-dropper that will have your friends drooling on your carpet. The kit assembles fairly easily (and quickly) and, if instructions are followed, the genre modeller

SF and F International pocket guide

AB Models' 18" long resin and multi media Lady Penelope FAB 1 Rolls Royce kit.

Value for money (£250.00):



Ease of assembly and instructions:



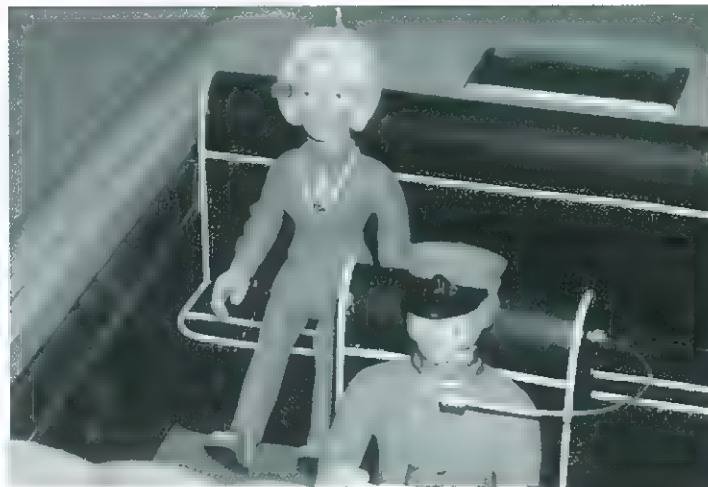
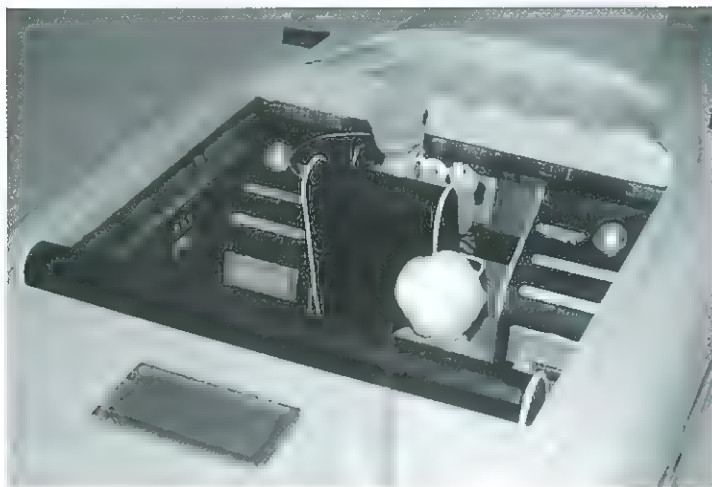
Suggested for standard assembly: Files; filler of choice; two-part epoxy adhesive; non-fogging glue; drill with 1, 2, 3, 6.5mm bits; high build primer; wet and dry paper.

Paints: High build primer/ white car primer; matt black car spray; pink car spray. Pot acrylics in various colours.

should find few—if any—problems along the way. The £250.00 price tag might seem steep at first glance, but then you *are* buying a studio quality model. Let me correct myself here... you are buying an *above-studio-quality* model. Studio miniatures are meant to be filmed, not displayed, so across a typical range of different miniatures produced of one vehicle for a film or series details can vary wildly—certain features being added

quickly (or left off completely) to conform to studio budgets, deadlines and filming requirements. Here you have a perfectly detailed generic replica of a studio miniature—a miniature, all-details-included version of what *FAB 1* would look like if it were a real car. If you get the idea that I like this model, you're right. I urge you to add it to your *AB Thunderbirds* collection as soon as you can...

S. R.



The Bill Pearson Dossier: Update report—FX projects 1997-1998

geoff topping



Bill Pearson is no stranger to the pages of this magazine, but just what has the elusive Scot been up to over the last couple of years? I caught up with Bill at Shepperton Studios and discovered that he has been kept very busy, having recently worked on some extremely interesting projects. Time to bring the SF&F Bill Pearson dossier up to date...

Geoff: So, Bill, what have you been up to since we last saw you?

Bill: I became involved on *Lost In Space*, not on the model side, but with the props. I was contacted by Angus Bickerton (*Lost In Space*'s visual effects supervisor) to make some magnetic locators for the motion control rig, which was quite a strange job for me.

Later, Angus asked me to construct a space helmet for the opening scene of *LIS*. It was actually only the top half of a space suit. Unfortunately the sequence it was to be included in was dropped from the movie.

The scene involved a construction worker working on the *Jump Ring* in the Earth's orbit. It was a close up of the space helmet and visor. The visor had to reflect the image of a space ship that was passing overhead.

The scene was shot using a designer from the art department as the construction worker.

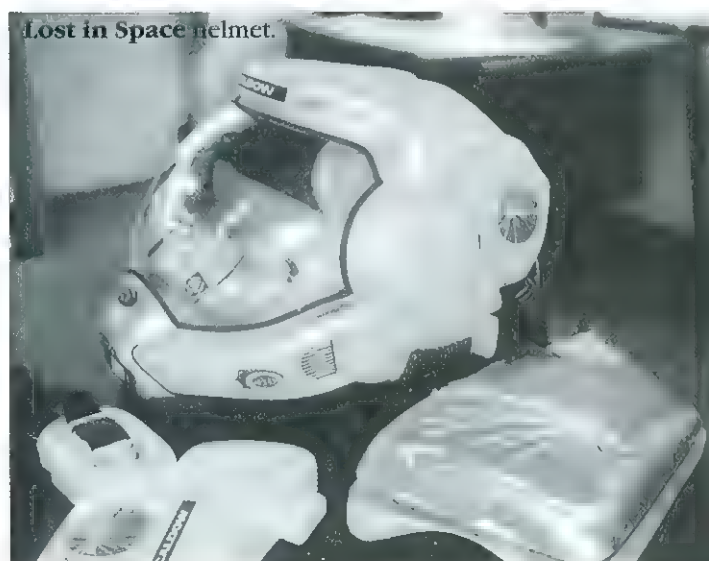
All the passes were done for the various elements; I made a grid that went over the helmet so that they could drop in the reflection of the space ship in post (production) but, sadly, it did not appear.

I was given a couple of drawings from the art department, and asked to adapt the concept into a space suit. There was very little time in which to do this. They said that I didn't have to follow the drawings one hundred percent, so I could cut corners. I had two weeks in which to make it. It was comprised of a helmet, shoulder pads and front and rear packs. The main technique utilised in its construction was vac-forming—I love this method! I first carved it out of high-density foam, then vac-formed it in *ABS*.

The one problem I knew I would have, which I solved very quickly, was condensation on the inside of the visor. At first, I really didn't know what I was going

to do—it's a problem that appears all the time. I didn't want to have to get into extremes such as a portable oxygen supply. The solution had to be quite simple.

I stole the idea! They had made some simple helmets for use in the picture that are seen fleetingly. They utilised an air tube coming from the helmet to which was attached a small fan. There was no complex air supply.



The fan sucked air into the tube and fed it up into the helmet. Because of the design of the helmet, it leant itself to fitting a small fan in the chin piece that pulled the air in.

The air from the fan kept the actor cool and stopped condensation from appearing and misting up the visor. The chin piece was also dressed with quartz bulbs to illuminate the actor, so it kept those cool as well. It was actually a mini fan from *Radio Spares*.

Geoff: The type used in computers?

Bill: Yeah—it cost about ten or twelve quid. I didn't think it would work, to tell you the truth. It was too simple. It was the only fan that would fit into the helmet, but for the sake of the cost it was worth trying. It was peanuts to the film's budget, and in the end it worked perfectly ...and it got me a similar job later, which was on *Space Island One*.

The production was shooting out in the Isle of Man, and they were having a similar problem with their space suits. So they 'phoned up *Shepperton Studios*' switchboard and asked if there was anyone there who could help them out. They had tried using portable air supplies, but they weren't helping at all.

We eventually got the job of converting them, and for these helmets we put two fans in. This kept the air moving and solved the problem. It's a very simple technique and I would suggest that anyone constructing a similar helmet use it as it works a treat.

Geoff: Did you produce anything else for *Lost In Space*?

Bill: Yes, I produced controls for the *Sedition Fighter*, and for the time machine I produced some panels that are seen fleetingly at the end of the film.

The *Borrowers* followed *Lost In Space*. I was approached near the end of the production and asked to produce *Exterminator Jeff's* backpack and gun. By this

Top: Bill poses with the space station he built for *La Femme Du Cosmonaute*.

Centre and right: *Space Island One* props.



point they didn't have much money left and they needed this prop very, very quickly. It had been designed, but the director wanted something a bit more controlled in the design (as what they had) was slightly wild. In my opinion, I would say the original concept was messy. The director himself had a few ideas on how it should be changed.

The backpack was a basic tank that had to be surrounded by dials and various valves. The main change that director, Peter Hewit, wanted was that the original prop had a hand pistol with a tube linking to the pack that would fire foam into John Goodman's face. Peter thought it needed to be beefed up; it had to be a two handed gun with a chunky appearance.

Geoff: Along the lines of a flamethrower?

Bill: Yeah. Peter also wanted it to be foldable, so that it could fold in half and be stored on the backpack, looking cool when Jeff removed it and allowing him to flick it open like cocking a *Winchester*. It had a physical cocking handle on the side, an on/off switch and a retractable sheath over the main foam nozzle on the front. In all it took a couple of weeks to design and build it.

Construction was mainly in *EMA* tube and *ABS* to keep it lightweight. However, it was also quite fragile. I put a lot of valves, dials and non-practical screws on it for dressing, and when Peter was happy with that I put an access panel on the back and *P40* all over the inside of the backpack to give added strength.

The actor who was wearing the pack had specific moves when using it, so I had to have a lot of fittings, to make sure that he could look back and tweak the valves, etc. Another thing was it had to look good when he was wearing it. That's again very basic, but the pack had a lot of harnesses on it and you don't want the actor to look like he's trussed up when he's wearing it or for it to ruin the line of the costume.

My next project was *Masterminds*.

Geoff: Hmm... I've not heard of it.



Bill: I think it's out on video now.

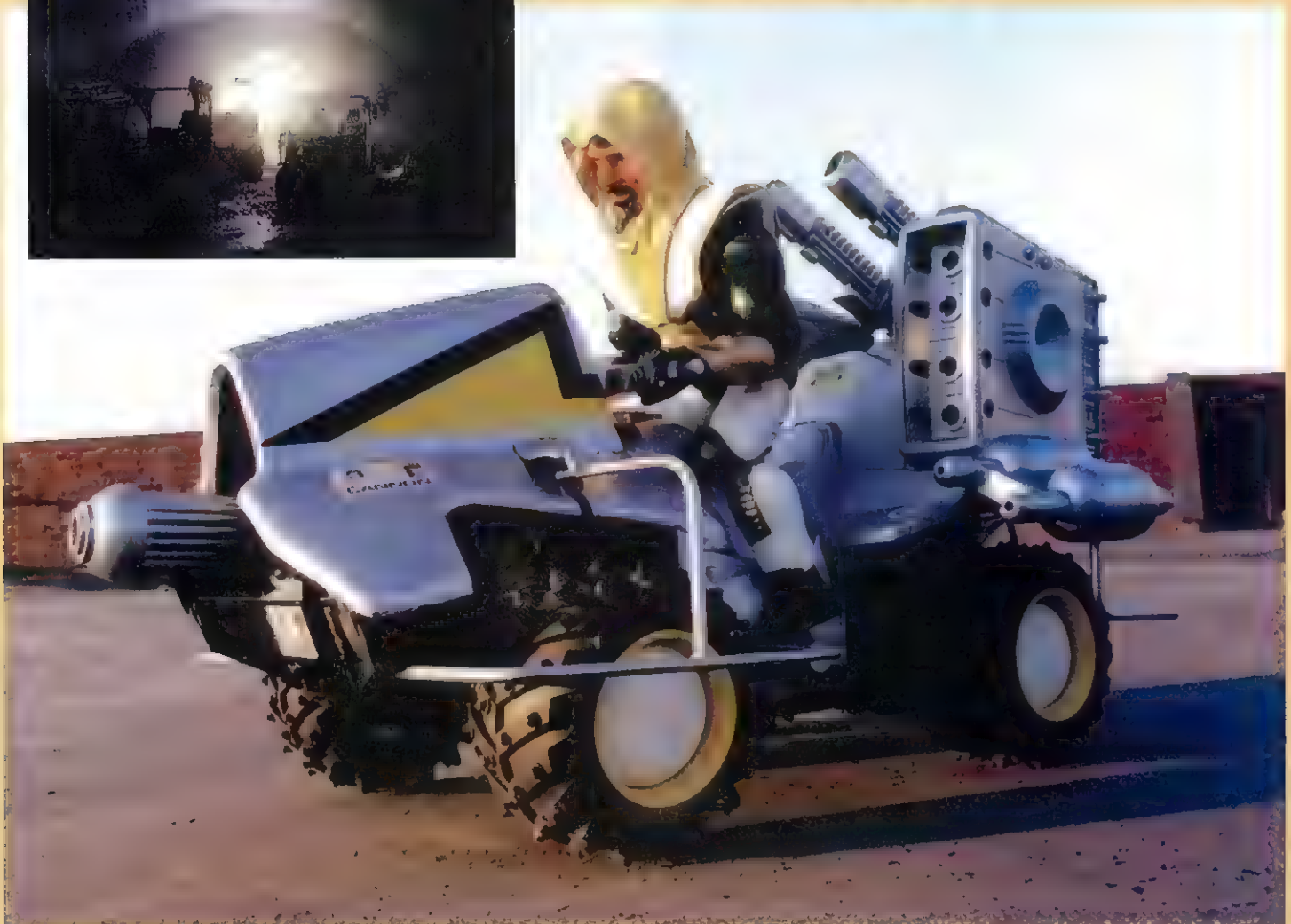
Geoff: Straight to video!

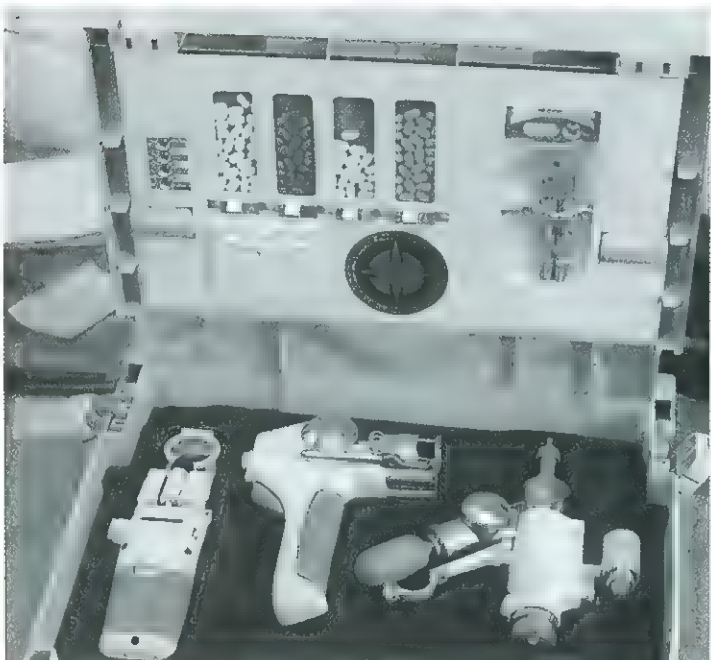
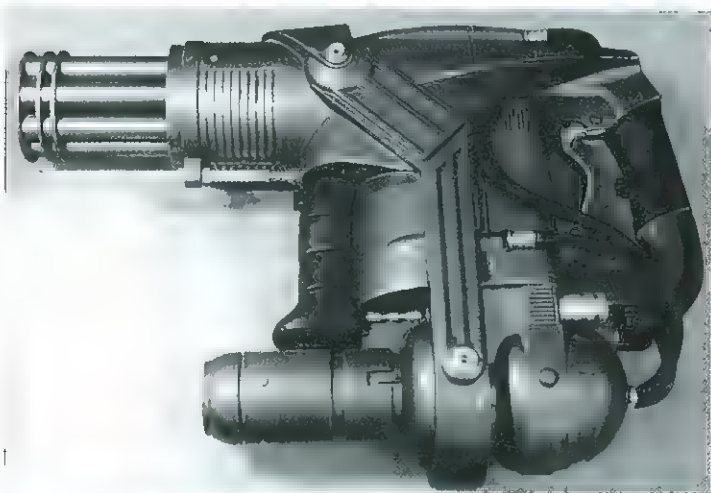
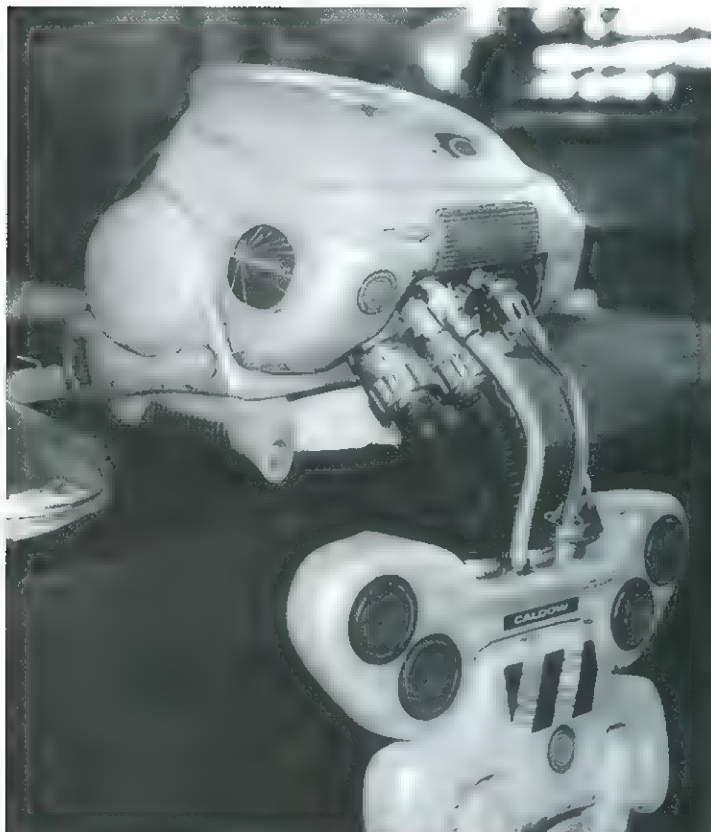
Bill and Geoff: Hooray!

Bill: At the time of production it was known as **Smartalec**. It was described as **Die Hard** meets **Home Alone** and it starred Patrick Stewart. The main character was a young lad who is the fly in the ointment. Patrick Stewart plays a janitor in an American school for the sons and daughters of the rich, famous and powerful. He closes all the security systems in the school, trapping everyone inside where he holds them to ransom. The idea is that one boy, who has already been expelled from the school, is on the premises and it is he who turns the tables on the criminals.

The production was shot in a school in Vancouver. What they

Bill on the miniature set for "Smartalec" On the left is his *Bobcat* ATV. Inset: the miniature set as it appears in the film. Below: *Savacen* from *The Secret Laughter Of Women*.





couldn't do over there was blow up the school's swimming pool. The hero takes one of the criminal's time bombs, swims out into the middle of the swimming pool, sets it and leaves the pool. It then goes off creating a large hole, which drains into the basement where the villains are digging an escape tunnel.

We had to produce it as a miniature based on the photographic reference that we received from Vancouver. When working with water, you want to make the model as big as possible. I would have liked to have done it as a 1/3rd scale piece, but that was just impossible. We eventually produced it in 1/6th scale, but it still made it seventeen feet long!

Geoff: That's about *Action Man*/G.I. Joe scale?

Bill: Yeah, we tend to stick an *Action Man* on a miniature set to give us an idea as to where the camera eyeline will be. We produced the basement set in one third scale. We had to create a lot of vehicles including a bog standard *BobCat* ATV. We constructed the vehicles from *MDF* and aluminium sheet.

At one point the *BobCat* had to have ninety five gallons of water dropped onto it, so it had to be pretty robust. The major problem on those models was that we couldn't buy tyres to that scale, so we had to make up tyres with complex treads using a series of glassfibre moulds and turning them out in glassfibre. Constructed in this way they could withstand the water pressure they were going to have to endure from the water coming down onto them.

Geoff: From tip-tanks?

Bill: In this case we used two forty-five gallon oil drums, because it was just the initial impact of the water coming down, having broken through the roof. I believe they had shot stuff over in Vancouver with tip-tanks, and they were matching up the live action with our footage. I saw the footage with the director, and he pointed out that some of the shots that I had thought were live

action had, in fact, been done with our models. Very quick cutting. But you can get it on video! (laughs.)

This was followed up by **La Femme Du Cosmonaute**, which was a French comedy. I've heard that there is a Brad Pitt film coming up with the same title that has nothing to do with it. They wanted all the typical space hardware. As it takes place on a mini space station it had to have a serious *NASA* look to it. The job came through *Magic Model Company*—they were still heavily involved in *Lost In Space* so the job was contracted to me.

I received drawings from the French art department, who were pretty specific about the shape of the thing, but I was given free reign on the details. I took a lot of influence from *Skylab* with its foil panels and incorporated them onto the ships, rather than stock standard widget dressing.

I was covering areas with multi-layered aluminium *Baco-foil*, spraying six sheets with *Spraymount* and building them up as one layer. This made them easier to handle. You could put nice creases into them and they would stay in. I detailed the two main ships and a satellite with these.

Then I went onto some obscurities. First was **The Secret Laughter Of Women**, which is a film financed by the UK *National Lottery* that is still waiting for release. It's set in South Africa, but was actually shot in the south of France.

The story concerns a Stan Lee-like character played by Colin Firth, who is a creator of comic-book superheroes. He creates a character called *Saracen*, and my colleague who works with me, Jim Cornish, was hired as concept designer on it. Jim came up with the design of *Saracen* and some of the gadgets he uses.

Through Jim I was contacted to build action figures for *Saracen* based on a good old *Action Man*.

I built up the features and changed the facial features and carved the costume in foam and vac formed it. We even went to the degree of making blister packs for the figures so we could have them hanging as dressing in toyshops for one scene.

We also had to make a radio

Top: 3/4 rear shot of helmet built for **Lost In Space**.

Centre and left: hand props built for **Space Island One**.

controlled vehicle for *Saracen*. I made this using an off the shelf radio controlled car from *Beatties* over which I put a vac formed body. We made a different scale *Saracen* figure to ride in that. We also made wristwatch communicators that were toys, but, as they featured in the script, a few of them had to be practical. This was accomplished purely through the addition of LEDs.

Space Island One had been an ongoing job for me over this time, designing and producing hand props.

Production was over on the Isle of Man, and I would be called over occasionally to operate props on set. This made a nice change to being in the *Shepperton* workshop. Once you walked from the airport, the actual studio was five minutes walk away.

Geoff: Will there be a new series of *Space Island One*?

Bill: Funnily enough I'm due to see one of the production assistants from it this week as she wants a loan of some bits. The Production Company sold a lot of the hand props when the last series finished and everything else was burned, so if they were to produce a new series, they would have to start from square one.

Geoff: Does it make a nice change to work on realistic sci-fi shows/films such as this one?

Bill: It's nice to make something to someone else's design, as on *La Femme Du Cosmonaut*. I'm employed a lot of the time because I'm a model maker/designer. People come in, especially when they can't afford an art dept., and say, "I'm after this sort of thing." It saves them money, you can cut corners and you can produce it quicker. It does make a pleasant change to make something that is accurate to present-day standards. It looks as if it could be up in space right now. I feel that I never get enough of the stuff that is so far in the future that I can go nutty on it! Even on *Space Precinct*, we were so restricted design wise that we didn't have a chance to let our imaginations run away with us.

Geoff: So that's the production you're waiting for, the one where Bill Pearson can go mad, design-wise.

Bill: After a while you think, "There were other films, there are other design answers away from *Blade Runner*, the *Alien* and *Star Wars* movies." It's increasingly difficult to find something original. It's nice to be given the option to accomplish this.

I didn't get any options for the next job, which was with *Oxford Scientific*. It was an advert for an American telecommunications exhibition. The brief was to make five satellites. They gave me artists' renderings from a space manual which must have been one inch square! They said that was what they were looking for. There were five of us on the job and we had a week each in which to produce a satellite. We had to interpret it from this thumb nail-size book.

Alan Brannan, who was on the team, took the job of building the solar panels. We were looking for something that looked interesting rather than technically accurate. We used blue, purple and gold metallic card. We scored 1mm perspex, and between that we sandwiched clear acetate, which Alan had printed with lighter and darker squares on his computer. This produced a random checkerboard effect, which looked neat and gave the impression of something going on in the panels. The resulting miniatures were shot motion-control.

Wing Commander was my next job. Mark Harris was in charge of props, models and sets under the film's designer, Peter Lamont, whose previous credits include *Titanic*. There weren't any models featured in the film to my knowledge. It's due for release soon.

We were given designs by the art department and we had to make three dimensional models from those designs which were then sent on to *Digital Anvil*, the film's resident CGI company. They used our models as a guide to building the ships in the computer.

We put so much detail into the models that they could have

Top: *Exterminator* Jeff's backpack and gun featured in *The Borrowers*.
Centre and right: Excavation jig and swimming pool explosion sequence from "*Smartalec*".

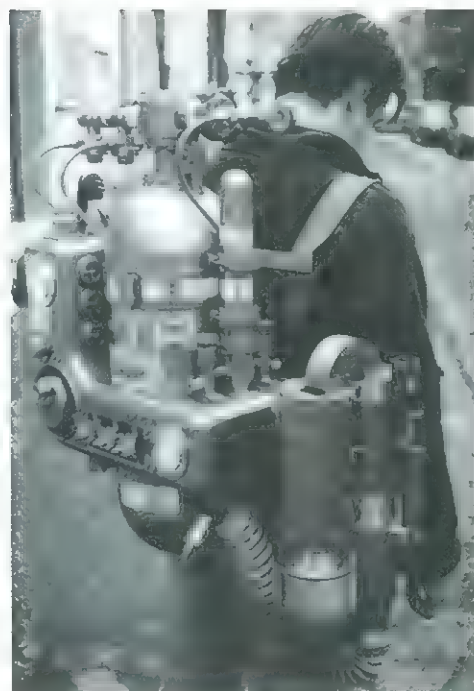
actually been filmed. They did use areas on the models as a guide for the texture maps. It was an interesting exercise and I'll be interested in how the CGI rendered ships turn out.

We were also making helmets and weapons. We produced rotary barrelled *MIDI* guns for the *Earth Force Troopers*. These were practical; they span round and fired pyrotechnic charges in each of the barrels. They emptied in around a second and would only fire charges once in one revolution.

The rotary powered part of the gun was powered by one of my old favourites, a *Black & Decker* cordless screwdriver. Unfortunately I don't think they were seen

as functional in the film and ended up as background props.

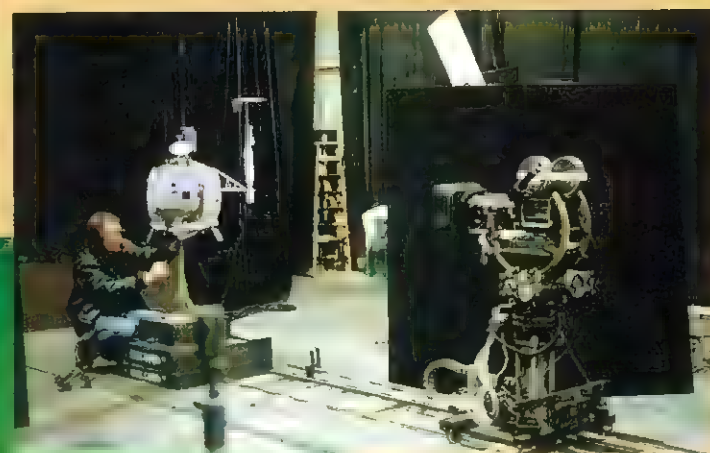
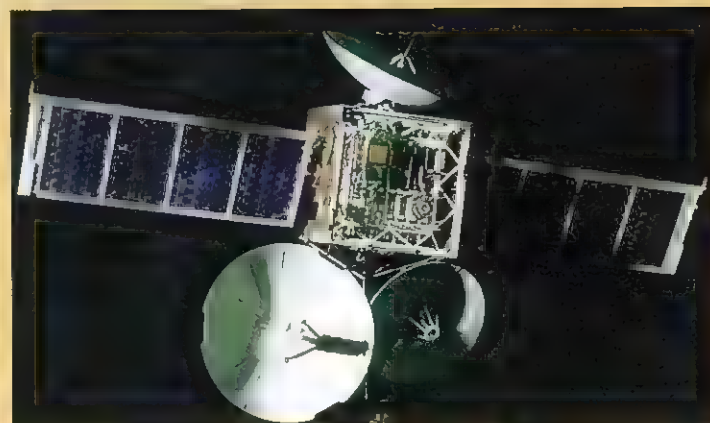
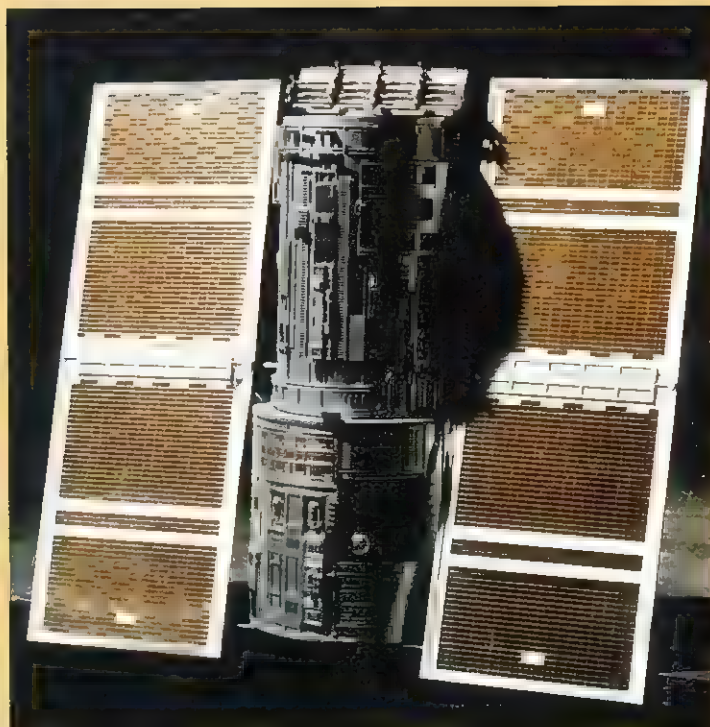
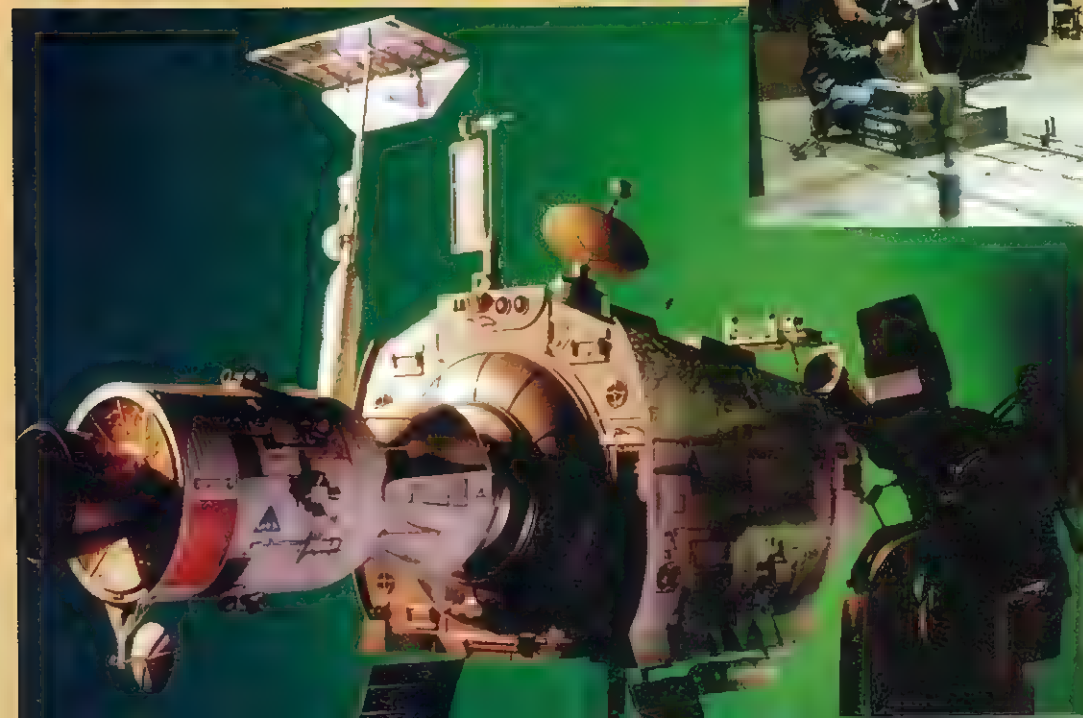
Geoff: So they only went for the practical, dressed AK 47s?



Bill: Yeah, these were being made in the same workshop I was in, but I wasn't involved with them. They were dressing the AKs' receivers with fibreglass shells.

Other hand props I made included a medical first-aid case. Again, I've no idea if it's seen in the film. In this was a small laser scanning device, which was

based on a *Philips Phillishave* razor. I packed it with a couple of motors, *EMA* rams and a three-milliwatt laser. I linked a magnifying lens to the rams so that it appeared that it was focussing the laser. This gave the appearance that it was sealing wounds, etc. You'll have to go along to see the film to see if it features.



Left hand column: front and rear views of Bill's astronaut's helmet constructed for *Lost In Space*.

Top and centre: Satellites built for an American telecommunications exhibition.

Above: Bill readies the mini space station (*La Femme Du Cosmonaute*) for filming on *Shepperton's M* stage.

Left: the space station seen against a greenscreen.

Anatomy of a Shuttle

Rick Sternbach, Senior Illustrator
Star Trek Voyager
 Paramount Pictures



Star Trek, in all its varied incarnations, has produced an equally varied fleet of small (and not so small) shuttlecraft to ferry crews and supplies on away missions. The Original Series brought us the boxy but unique Galileo. The Next Generation spawned the newer, curvy Sakharov, a chopped and channeled version of the Star Trek V shuttle, and the very small, two-seater shuttlepod El-Baz. The feature films produced flocks of starbase shuttles and workbees. Star Trek Deep Space Nine was given a new Danube class runabout, and the U.S.S. Voyager has been blessed with a seemingly endless supply of shuttles in its five season history so far, including the low-slung little ship nicknamed the Speedboat.

In the spring of 1995, the producers sent around a memo asking for a design for a new shuttle to either replace or augment the larger *Type 6* shuttlecraft that had been around for most of the TNG run. They were also asking if this new design could take off and land from somewhere other than the single shuttlebay in *Voyager's* tail. This second request really never panned out, since there aren't many other openings to the vacuum of space besides the docking ports and cargo loading doors.

I suppose that, in a pinch, the new shuttle could have squeezed through a cargo door, but luckily we've never had to show this.

The new shuttle, eventually labeled as *Type 12*, had to be smaller and sleeker and cooler than the big *Type 6*. This would be *Tom Paris'* new hot rod, although we know now that his real hardware love is the *Delta Flyer*. *Starfleet* styling would drive the design, and would include everything a good shuttle should have: *impulse* and *warp*

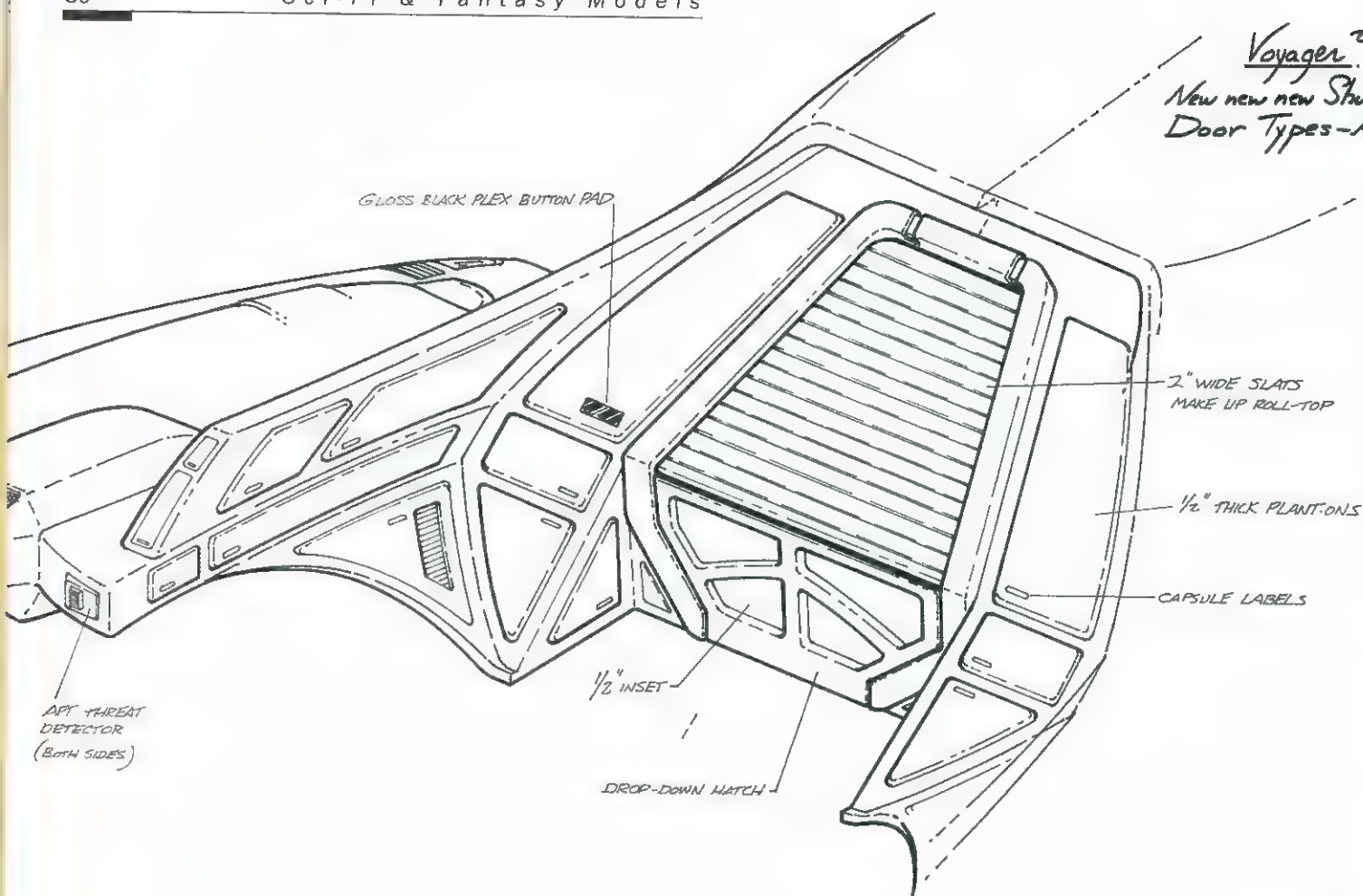
drives, *phasers*, *transporter* emitters, defensive *shield* grid, nav deflector, reaction control system (RCS) thrusters, landing plates, hull markings, entry hatch, widgets, greeblies ...and windows!

The windows, as well as the entry hatch, would be important identifiable elements that would tie together the exterior with the interior, since we were building a full-size cabin set to match the miniature and CGI shuttles. This required close interaction

between myself and John Chichester, the set designer in the *Voyager* art department responsible for the interior look of the cabin. I set to work defining the basic hull shape, which was based on an octagonal cross-section common to the "Breadbox" *Type 6* and *Type 9 "Hyundai"* shuttlepod, essentially two trapezoids with a small vertical equator between them. The nose was lengthened, the roof lowered, and the nacelles were updated to mimic those of *Voyager*. Incidentally, we had attempted an updated *Type 6* some time earlier, but it was only seen a few times as a miniature built by Greg Jein. We never translated the new nacelles and nose extension to the full-size *Type 6* set piece, due to costs, balanced against building an altogether new and interesting shuttle.

For me, the process of shaping a new spacecraft begins with a lot of blue pencil and felt-pen doodles, sometimes three or four 11"x17" pages full of them, often drawing the same shape

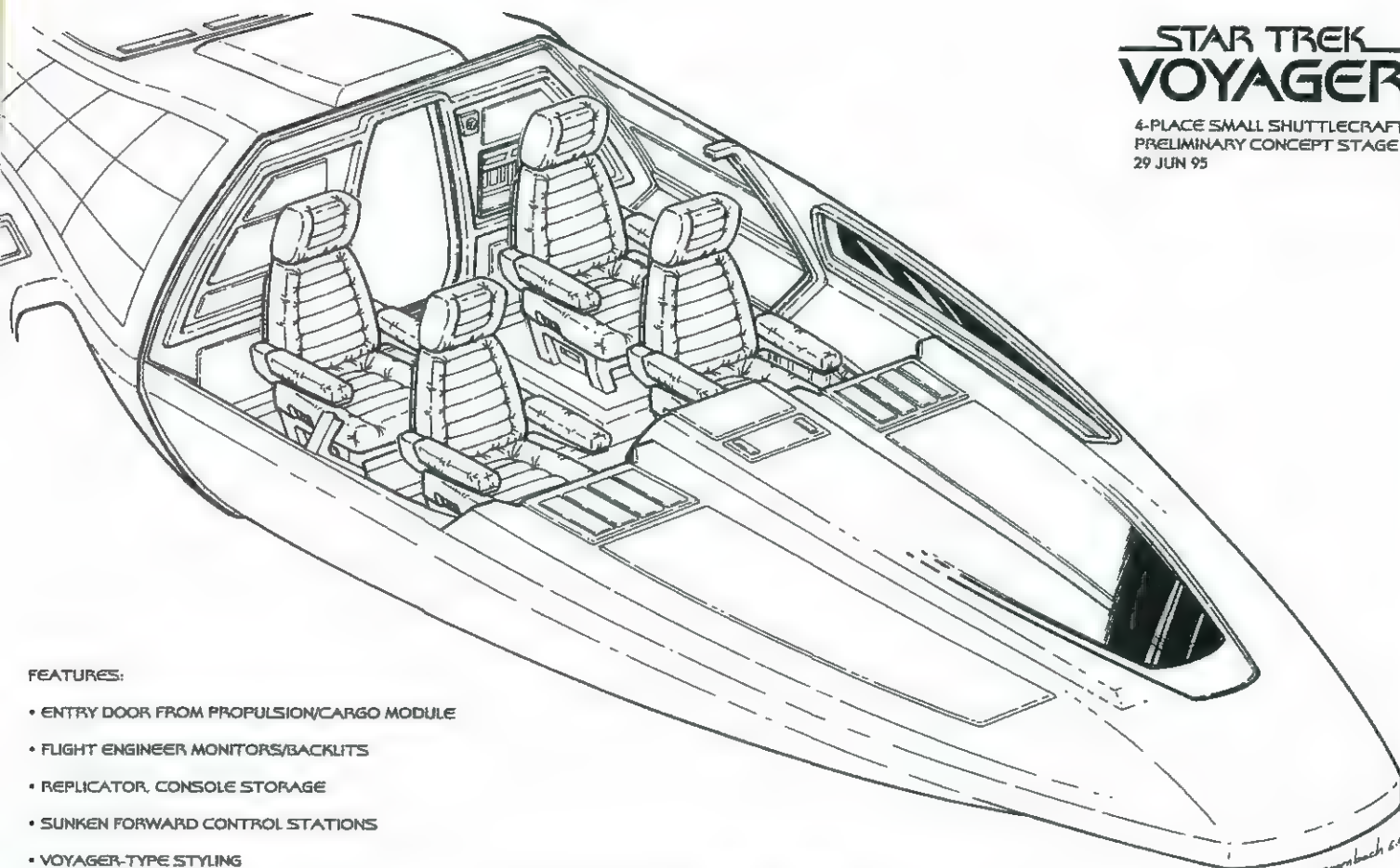
Voyager²
New new new Shuttle
Door Types-Aft



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STAR TREK VOYAGER

4-PLACE SMALL SHUTTLECRAFT
 PRELIMINARY CONCEPT STAGE 2
 29 JUN 95



FEATURES:

- ENTRY DOOR FROM PROPULSION/CARGO MODULE
- FLIGHT ENGINEER MONITORS/BACKLITS
- REPLICATOR, CONSOLE STORAGE
- SUNKEN FORWARD CONTROL STATIONS
- VOYAGER-TYPE STYLING

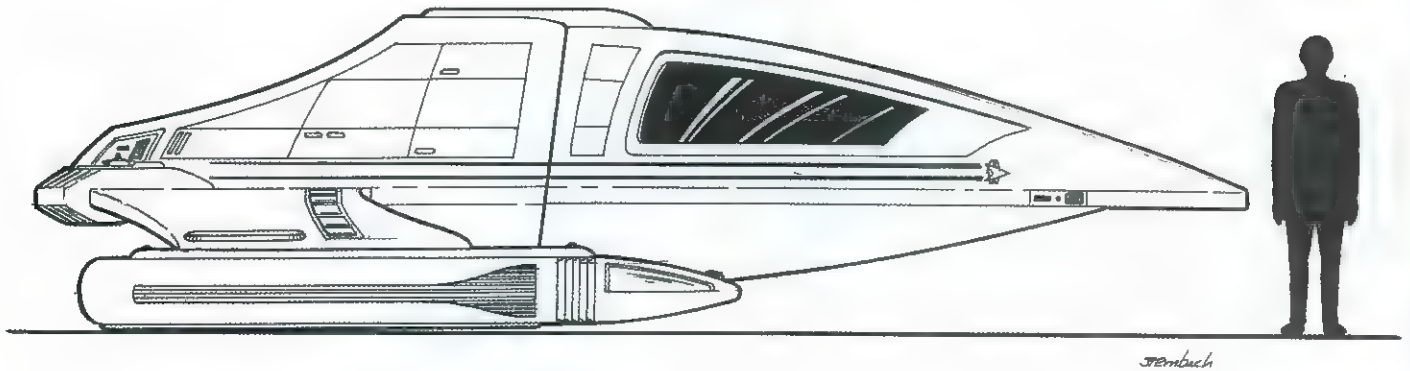
3/4 FRONT PERSPECTIVE VIEW, INTERIOR

FEATURES:

- STRETCH CABIN, 4 SEATS
MISSION COMMANDER, PILOT, FLIGHT ENGINEER, MISSION SPECIALIST
- VOYAGER STYLING
- SEPARABLE CABIN AND PROPULSION SECTION
- DROP-OPEN REAR ENTRY HATCH
- IMBEDDED WING IMPULSE ENGINES
- VOYAGER-TYPE WARP NACELLES

STAR TREK
VOYAGER

4-PLACE SMALL SHUTTLECRAFT
PRELIMINARY CONCEPT STAGE 2
29 JUN 95



STARBOARD ELEVATION VIEW

over and over, but changing some little details each time. Simultaneously, decisions about types of hardware shapes to be included, size of the final product, and stylistic concerns all affect the design. Should the *nacelles* simply be sidled up against the hull, or should they be placed on pylons? Conceptually, where might the *warp* engine go? The *impulse* nozzles? Should the nav *deflector dish* go on the hull top or under the chin?

Gradually, the doodles gave way to the first of a series of orthographic views to make sure the shapes that seemed to work in the doodles could actually be built in model form. We knew CGI could handle the most impossible shapes, but would the hull and *nacelles* pose any construction problems in a physical miniature? As it turned out, the *Speedboat's* aft end gave Tony Meininger and his *Brazil Fabrication* team a bit of a challenge, since the pylon root attachment surface, while looking robust from most angles, was actually fairly short due to the long inboard setback of the entry hatch. As built, the aluminum internal framing was substantial enough to keep the *nacelles* from torquing. I wasn't overly worried, since Tony has also

masterminded the construction of a few other designs of mine, notably the *Deep Space 9* space station, the *runabout*, and the *U.S.S. Voyager*, each with its own set of construction problems. With the preliminary look of the hull approved, we were free to flesh out the details. Under the direction of production designer Richard James, John Chichester

developed the cabin set; John and I bounced shape ideas back and forth. His ceiling plan, for example, drove the look of the roof lines and dorsal sensor platform (for some unknown reason, most shuttles have what look like recreation vehicle air conditioners on top). I provided a few interior sketches along the way, particularly where we

were asked to explore the use of two rear jumpseats or four full-size seats or a combination of the two. Initially, the aft cabin was blocked off, and was finished later. We knew, however, that it (and thus the model) would have to be six feet high inside to accommodate the actors standing upright. They can't stand in the forward flight



Courtesy of Foundation Imaging.



Courtesy of Foundation Imaging.

Page 29:

Aft side—aft entry hatch is seen as being set quite forward from the pylon ends.

Page 30:

Top: aft details—hoped-for details of the aft entry hatch and inner-surface plant-on plating are visible in this view done prior to miniature construction.

Bottom: cabin interior—one of several interior views showing possible control panel and crew seating arrangements.

Page 31:

Top: Initial approval drawing of starboard elevation of the *Type 12* shuttlecraft.

Bottom: 3/4 view CG rendering of the *Voyager* shuttle.

This page:

Left: Foundation Imaging's CG rendering of the shuttle—seen from the aft.

Below: top view—general exterior arrangement and bottom view—shows overall shape, weathering patterns.





the equatorial band. The sensors called for little inset greeblies, and greeblies we got. The bottom plan called for *Voyager*-type engine plates and vents, once I decided to put a "pancake" warp core in the sub-flooring. What the core would really look like will have to wait until the writers ask to see one in an episode, but I can tell you it's very, very flat.

Room was reserved for *Starfleet*-style markings; typically these are custom rub-ons, and usually we give the shuttle the registry number of the parent vessel in large numbers, and make the shuttle name somewhat too small to read on camera. A good thing, since we've blown up more shuttles than we care to count! Needless to say, in the CGI version of the *Speedboat*, now dubbed a "class two" ship, the graphics are a lot easier to change. Extensive color instructions are generated for most every ship we build; shuttles are fairly easy to spec out, as they are typically *Starfleet* beige with a few darker accents. This may sound simple, but it's part of a larger scheme to assign particular colors and styles to the spaceships of the major cultures in the *Star Trek* universe. You'll not likely see a beige shuttle attached to, say, a very green *Romulan D'Deridex* class *Warbird*.

Small incandescent running lights were placed port, starboard, and centerline. *Brazil* also rigged the *Speedboat* with neon in the nacelles for warp travel, and orange lamps in the impulse engines. Electrical connectors are located under detail plates both top and bottom, along with the model mounts for the motion control setup. Fortunately, shuttles have been pretty easy to design to accommodate mounting blocks, and few details have protruded to cast unwanted



those along with copies of the relevant set blueprints to give them an idea of what the real thing was to look like on stage. The cockpit window frames are built from a few stepped layers, and this is repeated on the outer hull. The set windows, when needed to reflect an image or contain smoke from a mid-flight disaster, are long, curved sheets of plexiglas which screw into place, and are removed for bluescreen FX work. The windows on the miniature are simply satin-finish black paint, since a full cockpit would have been somewhat more expensive and harder to prep for every FX shot.

The large (24"x36") ortho blueprints I do typically show a split top and bottom plan view, a starboard elevation, and a split fore and aft elevation, and a few key cross-sections. Most every unique detail is given a callout, though most of our model makers know this stuff by heart, since they've built these details many times before. In some situations, I'll do perspective sketches of details if the ortho views don't tell the whole story. At this stage, I'll include all the necessary structures in a typical *Starfleet* vessel, as mentioned earlier. Since the *Speedboat* would be landing on planets, the nacelles' bottoms were given corrugated footpads. The RCS quads were located and given the "usual" microfusion nozzles. The lit nav deflector, modeled after *Voyager*'s, was spotted on the top of the nose. Sensor strips, patterned after those on the *Galaxy* class *Enterprise* and *Voyager*, spanned

deck, but that's life; you can't have sleek and small and not have to stoop a bit! Interestingly, while the *Speedboat* is sleeker than the *Breadbox*, it turned out to be almost the same length, approximately twenty-eight feet. We didn't get to build a full exterior hull to

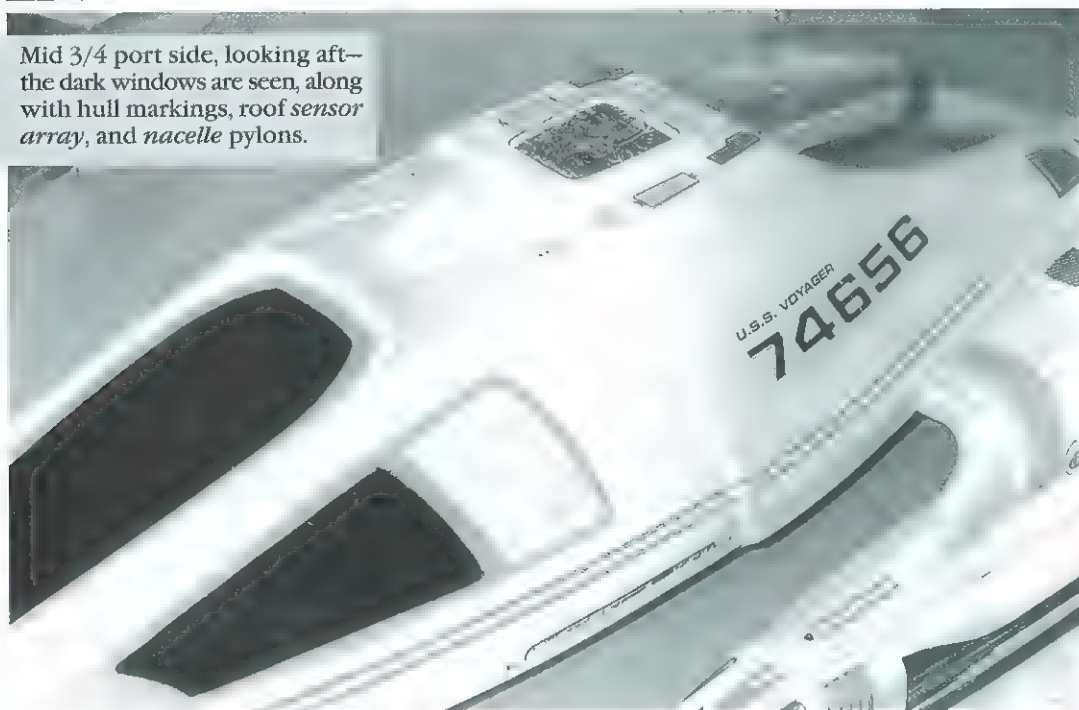
allow the actors to walk around it, but the cabin set piece is mounted on pneumatic shakers for getting those real bounce effects when the crew is hit by alien weapons fire.

I produced a set of blueprint drawings for *Brazil* to build their miniature, and shipped

Top: aft underside—a number of hardware details are visible, including the warp core hatch plate, transporter emitters, aft entry hatch, and nacelle landing plates. Also notice the long structural integrity field strips, raised half-rounds that supposedly help hold the shuttle together!

Above left: top aft port—inset roof sensors and plate details are seen, along with impulse engines and warp nacelle pylons.

Mid 3/4 port side, looking aft—the dark windows are seen, along with hull markings, roof sensor array, and nacelle pylons.



shadows on the mount posts. Sometimes there are exposed Allen screws holding on the cover plates or other bits. I don't have to tell Tony Meininger or Greg Jein to just make it so they look like they belong to the rest of the *Starfleet* gear; they know what to do.

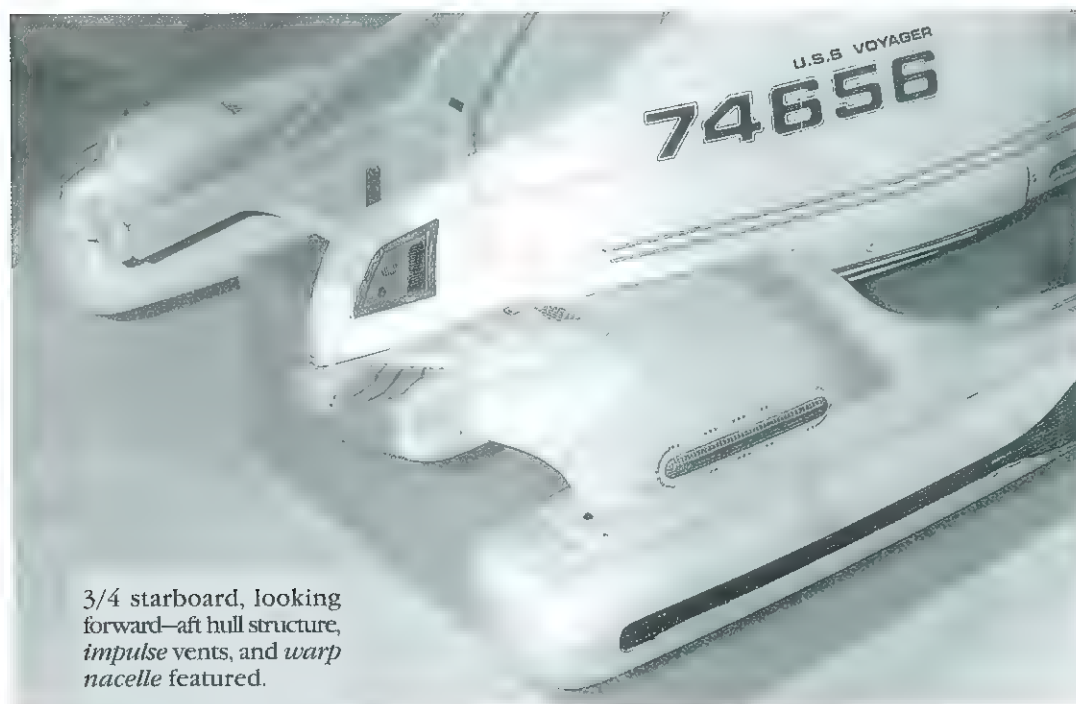
The aft entry hatch was one of the last details to be handed over to *Brazil*, since the aft cabin interior set had been slightly delayed. The exterior door shape, color, and framing were approved and released, and *Brazil* finished the filming model. Mike Okuda contributed some leftover *Voyager* hardware rub-ons to make a few equipment

hatches and systems we haven't figured out yet.

Foundation Imaging has since rendered the *Speedboat* in CGI, which begs the question about the fate of physical models not only in *Star Trek* but in all television and motion picture special effects. Some model shops are turning to CGI, while maintaining the ability to construct miniatures. Certainly for television, CGI is very cost effective, and for many effects in features, CGI can accomplish what models cannot. I would think that miniatures will likely be around for some time, since even the latest *U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-E* for *First Contact* was a ten-

foot long model built by *ILM*, and extensive use of miniatures highlighted the miniseries *From the Earth to the Moon*. Cost considerations and visual effects aside, there is something immensely satisfying in seeing one's five-view drawings come to life as a real, three-dimensional object to ogle at and admire the workmanship, and to point to all the neat fiddly bits and wonder, "Hmmm...what if I put a *Type XI phaser emitter* over here and that'll leave room for a *quantum microtorpedo launcher* over there..."

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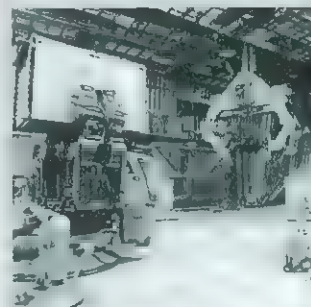


3/4 starboard, looking forward—aft hull structure, impulse vents, and warp nacelle featured.

Next time, in

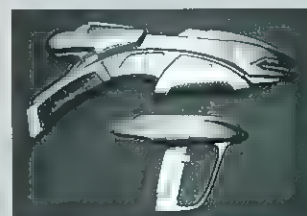
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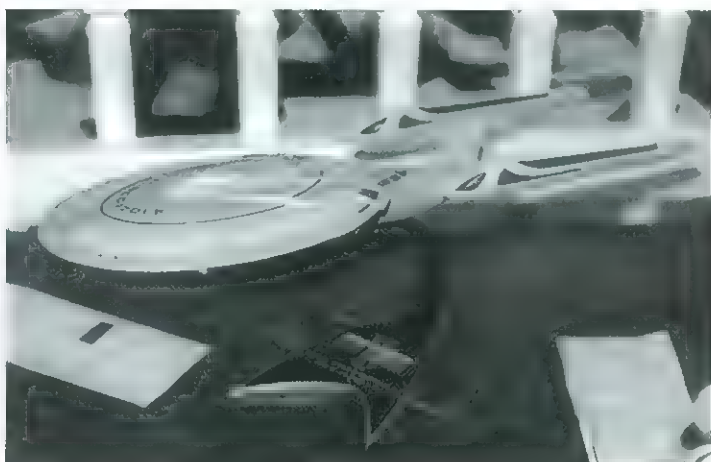
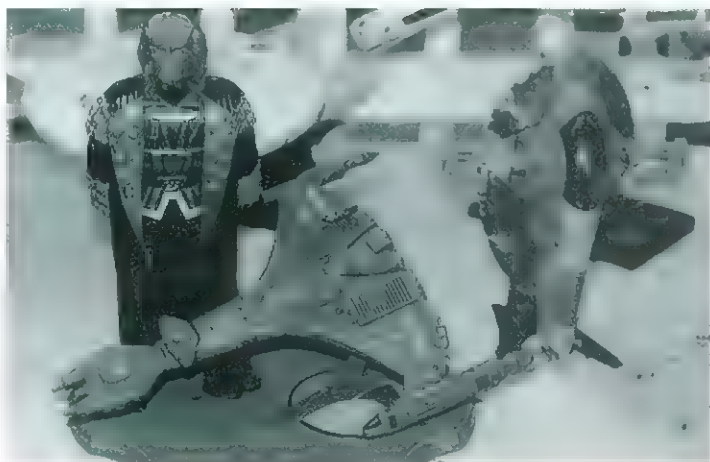
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Issue 37 on sale June 4.

Sci Fi ModelCon a success

anthony taylor



The First Annual Sci Fi ModelCon took place January 30th, 1999 at Berkmar High School. Promoted by the local Northmen chapter of the IPMS, the show was a rousing success, despite bad weather and competition from the Superbowl.

Attendance was good, and over sixty dealers competed for modelers' dollars in the well stocked Dealers' Room. Bargains could be had in any category as the show was run in conjunction with the "Northmen's" annual open scale model show and contest.

The Model Contest itself was overwhelming. Over seven hundred and seventy five models were entered, over one hundred of which were science fiction or character oriented. *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* models were plentiful, as were *Babylon 5* *Starfuries*, *Stations* and alien ships. Figures were well represented also, in many different genres.

Sci-Fi & Fantasy Models International magazine was pleased to sponsor a special award for "Best Sci-Fi" model in the show. The winner was Dan Thompson of Huntsville, Alabama, a longtime modeler and employee of the *U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command*. Dan's winning model was a giant mechanical scorpion, inspired by *DC's Blackhawk Comics* from the 1950s and '60s.

In Dan's own words, "This diorama depicts a battle typical of those found in the comic books of the 1950s. In this example, the good guys (*Blackhawk* and *Chop-Chop*) tackle a super-villain equipped with a mechanical crime machine. The villain is *The Scorpion* and his machine is a giant mechanical scorpion.

"The idea for this model was a combination of the cover of *Blackhawk* No.178 and the availability of AMT's *Rampaging Scorpion Diorama* (kit #8390-10DO). It seemed natural to convert the scorpion from the kit into a comic book style mechanical. When I began the project, I thought it would be a simple job to sand off the organic texture of the plastic scorpion to turn it into a mechanical version. Unfortunately, the kit parts were not uniform enough to look like a machine (it looked like

a real scorpion which, like most living organisms, is not uniform). So, very little of the kit was used. The conversion required scratch built replacements for the legs and claws. The legs were made from *Evergreen* styrene tubing, flared at the ends with a hot metal cone. The claws were made from similar flared tubing and pieces cut from sheet styrene (plastic card). The joints are small plastic spheres made from craft store pearls. The body was covered with strips of plastic and a piece of a plastic easter egg to give the appearance of an articulated mechanical body. New joints were made from larger diameter tubing to attach the legs and claws to the body. I did use the tail from the kit, but cut the segments apart, sanded them smooth, and reassembled them with plastic tube joints to produce the right articulation. Oddly, once the individual tail segments were smoothed and shaped for symmetry, they looked very much like the leg and arm segments of some anime *mechs*. A cockpit with a clear dome canopy was scratchbuilt and fitted into the scorpion. A

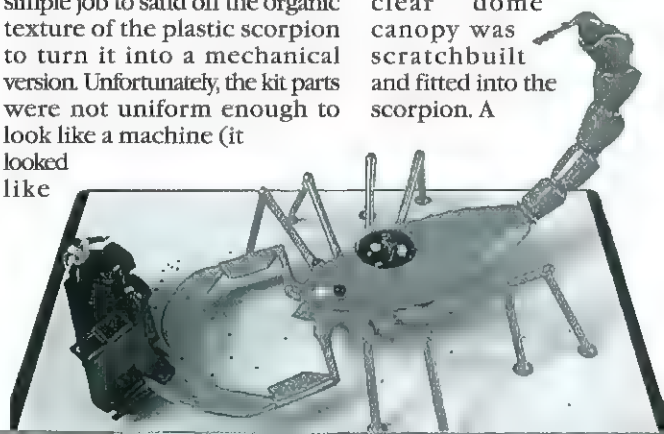


1/72 scale *Land Rover* made by *JB Models* and 1/72 scale *Prieser Luftwaffe* figures converted to *Blackhawk*, *Chop-Chop* and the villainous *Scorpion* completed the scene."

Dan has written articles for *Finescale Modeler Magazine* and hopes to submit projects to *Sci-Fi & Fantasy Models International* soon.

Sci Fi Modelcon 2 will take place next January, dates and venue to be announced.

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e-mail: ataylor@mindspring.com





Hangar 57

The international gallery of imaginative reader projects



Barry Ford of Radcliffe, Manchester, UK, decided to build themed diorama bases for each of the *Horizon* 1/8 scale vinyl *Batman* series figures he had assembled, airbrushed and hand painted. Each base has identical dimensions of 150mm wide x 220mm long x 280mm tall. Barry's *Penguin* diorama features wall panelling made from wood veneer and glass mosaic tiles. "Parquet flooring" was created using stained and painted pieces of balsa wood strip. The *Bane* base has a "stone" wall and floor made from painted and stained *Milliput*. The door is balsa with *plasticard* hinges. For the *Two-face* diorama Barry used balsa panelling with infill panels created by using a combination of painted *plasticard* and small mirrors. *Poison Ivy* stands against a greenhouse-effect wall composed of *plastruct* "I" sections and airbrushed clear plastic sheet. The base uses textured *plasticard* as tiling, with soil being represented by textured acrylic medium. Finally, *Robin*'s base incorporates a clay wall



and an architecturally correct sash window assembled from balsa sections. The floor also features a parapet wall constructed from balsa and *plastruct* sections.

Continuing the superhero theme, Jonathan Grey of Didcot, Oxon, UK, scratchbuilt his *Batman* 1/12 scale diorama from *Milliput*. The cape was shaped from strips of *Mod-Roc* that Jonathan coated in fibreglass resin. The buildings are balsa wood with pieces of *plasticard* stuck here and there for extra detailing, the base itself being a piece of *MDF*. Jonathan's inspiration for his creation came from a *Batman* poster and the project took around eight hours to complete.

Also by Jonathan is this 1/6 scale *Superman* figure (see opposite page), made entirely from *Milliput* (seven packs of it, in fact!). He stands thirteen inches tall and is based on a piece of comic book cover art. As the picture he was copied from only depicted *Supie* from the waist upwards, Jonathan's

brother James, who is the right height and build, was persuaded to pose for reference photographs so that Jonathan would know which way the suit's material would hang and fold. *Superman*'s glasses are simply shaped strips of solder wire with small pieces of clear *plasticard* for lenses. The figure was finished with *Tamiya* aerosol paints and the hands, face and chest brush painted. The base is a piece of *MDF* and *Superman*'s "S" was cut out of coloured card then stuck in place with a layer of transparent adhesive-backed plastic. The project took around forty hours to complete.

Anthony Instance of Croydon, Surrey, UK, created his five foot tall *Skeksis* creature (see opposite page) from *The Dark Crystal* from cardboard tube, latex and real shark's teeth, which, he says, took him some time to find, with him eventually tracking down a supplier in North Yorkshire!



Scratchbuilder /Sculptor?/Converted a standard kit/ CGI modeller?

Showcase your science fiction or fantasy modelling or sculpting talents by sending shots (photographs should ideally be in sharp focus and taken against a plain, uncluttered background) or colour jpegs, together with a brief explanation of how you accomplished your projects, to *Hangar 57*, 57, Lynwood Avenue, Clayton-le-Moors, Near Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 5RR, U.K. (We're sorry, but *SF&F* cannot return *Hangar 57* photographs).



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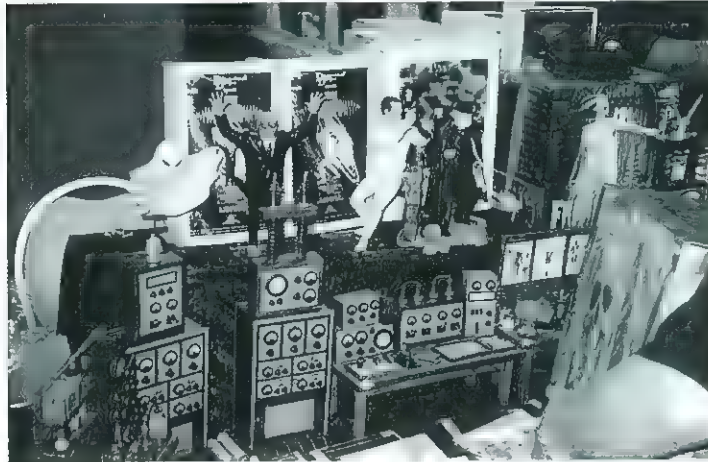
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Stuart Sumpter

E-Mail: stuart.sumpter@dial.pipex.com

US kit report

anthony taylor



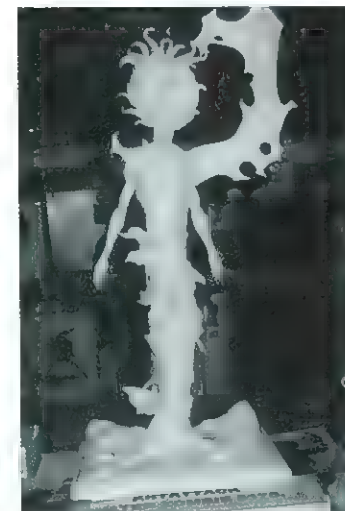
Welcome! Two recent shows have revealed a bounty of awesome kits for this year! News from the *Chicago National Model and Hobby* show is very good for kit builders in 1999.

AMT/ERTL have just reissued the *Space 1999 Eagle* and *Moonbase Alpha* kits to commemorate the (fictional) year that the moon blasted out of Earth orbit and took off for parts unknown. The Gerry Anderson adventure show first aired in 1974. Also due is a re-release of the *Alien* from the 1979 Ridley Scott movie, originally issued by MPC. Coming too is the *Enterprise C* from the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episode *Yesterday's Enterprise*, a *Death Star*, vinyl *Rancor Monster* from *Return of the Jedi*, and eleven kits from the forthcoming *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*. The company will also reissue the *Munster's Koach*.

Polar Lights also has a hefty genre lineup for '99. They are re-releasing both of *Aurora's* customizing monster kits, as well as *James Bond* and *Odd Job* from *Goldfinger* and *Aurora's Mummy* and *Godzilla* kits. Original offerings from the company include *The Three Stooges* (Moe, Larry, Curly and Shemp; so it's actually four) sculpted by Pat Delaney; *Godzilla*, the modern movie version sculpted by Jim Grohman; the *Lost in Space Robot* on a new base with a figure of Dr. Smith sculpted by Pat Delaney and a 1:8 scale styrene version of

Randy Bowen's *Wolfman* kit, previously offered in resin at 1:4 scale by the company. Available now is the *Psycho House* from Hitchcock's classic movie. It is approximately the same size as the *Addam's Family House* kit that the company produces. This list only gets *Polar Lights* about halfway through the year, so expect more news from them soon.

Testors are releasing a *Roswell Crash Scene diorama* in resin,



based around a reworked *Roswell UFO* kit. This will be in their *Hobby Shop Only* line and retail for about \$60.00. There are also several new *Jimmy Flintstone* resin figures to be released, including a large *Dragon*.

Meanwhile in New Jersey...

The *Chiller Theatre Show* took place the same weekend as the *National Model and Hobby Show*, but catered to a slightly different crowd. The show fell on the Halloween weekend again this year, insuring peak attendance and lots of people in fun costumes. Guest artist Jeff Pittarelli even grabbed the chance to be married on Halloween Saturday evening, and the bride was given away by TV horror host Zacherle, the cool ghoul.

There were many new kits on display, although several *Chiller* stalwarts were not in attendance. *GeoMetric Designs* (who were busy at the *Chicago Hobby Show*) were represented by *Amazing Figure Modeler Magazine's* Terry Webb who did a brisk business selling their kits as well as displaying *Geo's* new *Hunchback of Notre Dame Bust*. The likeness to Lon Chaney's classic character is very good. For more information, contact *GeoMetric* at: 122 South Wabasha Street, Ste. 340, St. Paul, MN 55107 612-291-1909 or visit them on the web at <http://www.geometricdesign.com>.

Action Hobbies' Larry Johnson was on hand, displaying his new *Invasion of the Saucer Men*

kit. The model is based on the poster for the classic B movie and captures the spirit and fun of the film. He was also selling his *Phantom* (comic strip) and *Mars Attacks* kits. Contact *Action Hobbies* at 720 Rummage Road, Cox's Creek, KY 40013.

Ed Bowkley of *Diceman Creations* was showing new kits of Glenn Strange and Boris Karloff from *House of Frankenstein*, and *Buckwheat* from the *Little Rascals*. Both kits were sculpted by Ed White and sported excellent likenesses. Also new was *Beanie and Cecil*. *Diceman's* new *Night Dreams* kit depicts a sexy female vampire holding a skull. It comes on a good sized base with a coffin and tombstone. For pricing and info on all of his kits, contact Ed at (201) 939-1521 or write to 34 Feronia Way, Rutherford, NJ 07070.

Steve West of *Cellar Cast* premiered his latest kit based on the paintings of fantasy master Boris, called *Leather*. As with his previous offerings, this kit does not disappoint. Also new for the company was a bust of Christopher Lee as *Dracula*. To order, contact Steve or Melinda at (206) 723-6801 or write them at 621 54th Avenue, South, Seattle, WA 98118.

Sassy's Satellite got very busy selling their new 1:3 scale Boris Karloff *Frankenstein* tribute kit.

Top (l to r): Ben (*Creature from the Black Lagoon*) Chapman and friend; *Dimensional Designs'* new kits; Danny Fay of *Sassy's*. Inset: *Action Hobbies'* *Saucer Men*; *River Bottom Blackheart*.



It is over two feet tall and sculpted by Tony McVey, cast in vinyl at a show special price of \$100. All I can say is I saw them load in many large boxes full of the kits on Friday, and they sold out before they left. Sassy's also had the new *River Bottom Blackheart* kit sculpted by Gabriel Marquez that was the big winner in the last *Wonderfest* Model Contest. The kit depicts the vampire *LeStat* rising from the river after he is torched by *Louis* from the film *Interview with the Vampire*. For information on all the kits Sassy's *Satellite* carries call 518-346-4580 or write 1279 The Plaza, Schenectady, NY 12308.

Although not in attendance, *Monsters in Motion* sent a copy of the new Jeff Yagher *Mummy Diorama* (see pic. above) and took preorders for the kit. This is the best looking *Mummy* piece I have ever seen, and it depicts Tom Tyler as the ancient Egyptian, standing on the steps of his tomb with a startled archeologist. It is available for \$150.00 from *Monsters in Motion*. Call them at (714) 281-3007.

And in other news...

Several of *Fairbanx Models'* kits have been rereleased by the *Doll and Hobby Shoppe* of Deland, Florida. When *Fairbanx* closed its doors, *D & H's* Frank Winspur snapped up the molds for some great kits including the entire *MONSTERMATES* line, which includes *Princess Ananka*, *Madame Kwazimodo* and the soon to be released *Wolf Girl*, as well as several *KISS* kits and the really wonderful *Aurora Monster Kit Replacement Heads* (the likenesses to the actors are much better than the originals). For pricing and ordering information on these kits, contact *The Doll and Hobby Shoppe*, 138 S. Woodland Blvd., DeLand, FL 32720. Or call them at (904) 734-3200. If you are online,

check out their website at <http://www.doll-hobby.com> and yes, they will sell internationally.

Bad news for fans of *Toho's* *Monster King: Polar Lights'* reissue of the *Aurora Godzilla* kit has been put on hold indefinitely. The company announced the reissue earlier this year, and it would have been available by now if problems had not arisen. *Polar Lights'* Dave Metzner says the kit may come out sometime in the future, but declined to estimate a time frame for release. The brand new *Polar Lights' Godzilla* kit (based on the *Centropolis* film from last summer) is still on schedule to be released soon. *Polar's* Paul Stanley of *KISS* model has hit stores and is selling well.

Revell/Monogram, who bought all of *Aurora's* molds when the company closed its doors in 1977, may be getting an inferiority complex due to *Polar Lights'* in the kit collectors market. Sources inform me that the company has been dusting off some of *Aurora's* molds and will be releasing some classic figure kits this year.

The second wave of *ToyBiz's* *Marvel Heroes* model kits are making their way onto *Toys R Us* shelves all over the country. This selection includes *Rhino*, *The Beast*, *Thor*, and *Captain America vs. The Red Skull*. The models are well sculpted and reasonably priced. It's good to see so many new figure kits for sale in mainstream outlets. Modelers are discovering or returning to the hobby in leaps and bounds due to abundant and inexpensive products such as these.

Resin from the grave:

Reports of garage kit company *Grey Zon's* death have been somewhat exaggerated. Due to overwhelming demand, sculptor/owner Luis de LaFuente has decided to continue making his product available exclusively through *Village Comics* in New York. No new pieces will be manufactured, but all of the great monster skulls and other kits can still be had. For more information, contact *Village Comics*, 214 Sullivan St. New York, NY 10012 or call them at (212) 777-2770.

E-mail: infosales@villagecomics.com

Review: *Babylon 5 Space Station*



Manufactured by: Revell-Monogram
8601 Waukegan Road
Morton Grove, IL 60053
800-833-3570.
Material: Styrene.
37 parts plus decals.
Length: 16 1/2 inches.
Available in hobby shops.
Ratings (1-10)
Packaging: 9. Likeness: 9.
Pattern Quality: 8.
Casting Quality: 10. Pose: N/A.
Detail: 7. Proportions: 9.

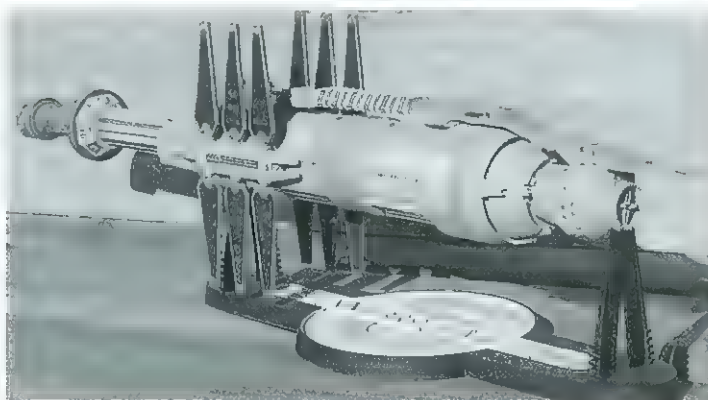
For nearly six years, science fiction fans have been tuning in to the exploits of the crew of *Babylon 5*. Created by writer/producer J. Michael Straczynsky as an intelligent but action packed adventure set on the frontier of outer space, the show was conceived as a continual five season story arc, a rarity in series television. The final episode aired in November on Cable's *TNT Network*, and now *Revell-Monogram* have finally released a kit of the mile-long station to complement the *Starfury Fighter* kit they released last December.

The kit is almost seventeen inches long, but looks small compared to the panoramic shots of *B5* seen on the show. The thirty seven parts come attached to two sprues of grey styrene and a large decal sheet and eight page instruction booklet are included. Molding of the parts is crisp and flash free. Detail consists of very fine raised lines and somewhat blurry patterns, which is sufficient at this scale. The complex hull patterns and markings seen on the computer generated special effects images of the station on the show are replicated by the decals.

The fit of the parts is excellent, the model needed no puttying and very little sanding. Unfortunately, the kit has some deficiencies when compared to the CGI models used on the show. First, the solar panel arrays are far too thick. Also, the two pieces comprising the "spine" and the two support arms for the solar arrays are completely lacking in detail on the underside, as though a piece was missing from the kit. I did check the instructions and it is made this way on purpose. I wound up filling these gaps with sheet styrene. Simple, but tedious. The supports for the base are molded directly onto the station. This allows the station to rotate (as it does on the show to simulate gravity) but for those who want a custom base it presents a problem. Some detail is either missing or molded directly (and incorrectly) to the surface.

Overall, the *Babylon 5 Space Station* is a decent kit and an easy build, perfect for a lazy Sunday afternoon. With a little bit of extra work it becomes a nice display model that anyone can be proud to put on their shelf. *Revell-Monogram* plan to release a "deluxe" version of the kit in the next few weeks, as they have done already with the *Starfury Fighter* kit. This version will include extra decals and a cloissone pin. Though I usually prefer resin kits I would recommend this model, especially to fans of the show and the casual hobbyist. That's all for this issue. Join me next time for more kit news and reviews.

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Machines of magick:

the creation of a fantasy airship miniature

Part Three

cliff erasmus



As discussed last time in part two of this article, the boiler was made from an 87mm Christmas ornament originally used to make snowballs. The hemisphere I chose was clear acrylic (perspex). Using 200 grit sandpaper I scuffed the outer surface of the boiler so that I could map out the panel lines with a pencil. I chose an uneven pattern of panels, giving the boiler a patchwork look and making it appear to have been owned by numerous people with varying skills.

I use many different types of dental tools and custom grind these to suit my varying needs for scribing. Scribing the lines on a hemisphere is a little tricky - you need a flexible and perfectly straight edge with some strength. There is nothing worse than having your tool slip and gouging either your surface or straight edge. I like to use an eraser template made of a very thin metal that has some spring to it so it goes back to its flat shape every time after use.

Once the panel lines were done I had to figure out how to do the rivets. This posed a new problem... namely, how could I cover this thing with rivets without cracking the hemisphere? As most of you probably know acrylic is very brittle when it is thin and this boiler is *thin* - 2mm, in fact. This is when one of those happy little accidents comes along. I discovered this technique when working on a piece of acrylic for another project. Using my *Dremel Moto-Tool* with a triangular cutting bit I was making a small countersink in the surface when I stopped cutting because the friction was melting the plastic. I pulled the tool from the piece and, to my

surprise, it left a small dome inside the dish of the countersink. *WOW!* Instant rivet. I had to try it right away on the boiler. It worked. Some fine strings of acrylic protruded from the little domes but these were easily removed by resanding the surface with 200 grit.

The steam stack involved some serious planning for its placement. If it were to be completely vertical with a slight tilt aftward the pilot would have difficulties seeing portside because of where the wheel is located for piloting the vessel. At this point I therefore decided to have it mounted at an angle and off to one side of the boiler. To make the steam stack I used a piece of 22mm x 9mm *EMA* fire column and *EMA* 9mm pipe. Both were cut to 68mm in length. The pipe was then ripped down the middle and the two halves were glued to the narrow edges of the fire column. Next I marked the shape of the stack on the boiler. Using the *Dremel* I cut out the oblong slot for the stack and then lightly tacked it to the boiler with methylene chloride (MC). I mixed up a small amount of *Milliput*, rolled it into a ribbon and wrapped it around the stack where it meets

the surface of the boiler. This created a mounting flange on the stack that contoured to the curves of the boiler. I let this sit overnight to cure and, once the *Milliput* was hard, I filed flat edges on to it. I detailed the stack with 0.10 styrene strips and *EMA* 2mm channel, the channel being used on the top of the stack while the two strips were placed between the channel and the flange.

When I put the boiler in place on the deck it looked as though something was missing. That's when I decided to add reinforcement braces to finish off the look. Not only do they look cool but they also look like they have a purpose. I figured three were all that would be needed. Using 5mm *EMA* H-column for the main support and 0.30 *ABS* for the overall shape I laminated them together with MC. The shape of the braces was determined by a scrap piece of *ABS* that just happened to be within arms' reach. I used the boiler to mark out the curve on the *ABS*, cut the opening in the center so as to leave a 6mm frame, placed it against the boiler and *voila* - one brace. I wish all model making happened this easily.

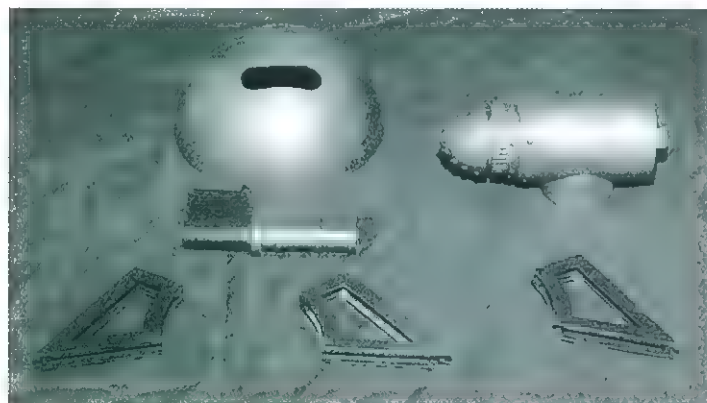
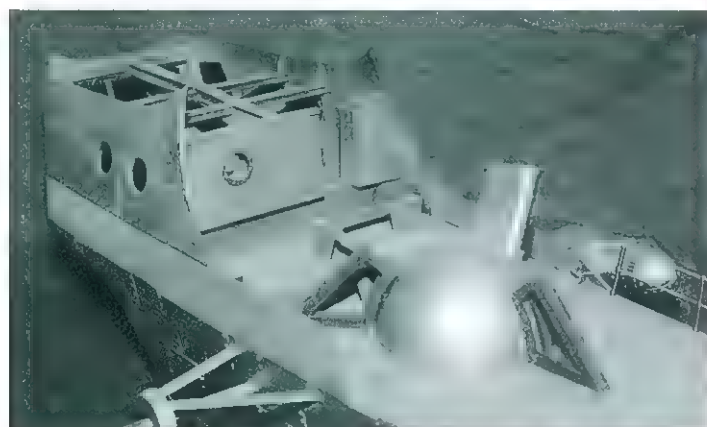
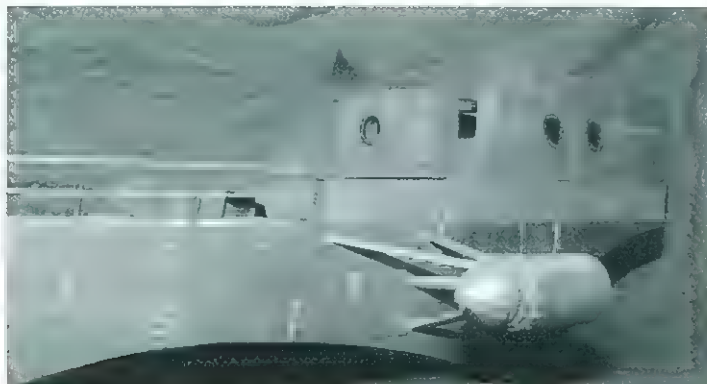
The braces were riveted using the same rivets as the ones on the hull.

Propeller Driven Motors

Coming up with the design for the motors was fairly simple. I liked the look of the original *Rocketeer's* jet pack so I thought the rather phallic-looking nose cone would look cool capping the front of the motor housing. Because the motors have to actually work, I needed to find some fast, small hobby motors to rotate a 120mm wooden pusher prop. I found two twelve volt motors that were 28mm in diameter. These little buggers really scream. They will be hooked up to a reostat to control the speed for filming.

Now, how was I going to disguise the electric motors to make them appear as if they were running off the steam boiler? First I would need to build a housing for the end cap and motor to all fit in one. Going back to the *EMA* rack I found *EMA* P32 piping to be exactly 28mm inside diameter. The motors fit like a glove. I cut two pieces of pipe to 51mm in length and two *EMA* P28 pieces to 15mm in length. The P28 pipe would be the mounting and pivot assembly to the motor struts attached to the side of the hull.

To make the end caps I poured some resin into an empty 35mm film canister. Because this is made of polypropylene resin won't stick to it. Once the resin is cured (about ten minutes) the solid piece drops out with a couple of taps to the back of the canister. I then turned one



of these plugs on my lathe to make the end cap. At this point I decided there was no way I was going to make another one, so I finished detailing it with rivets and strip styrene and prepped it for molding. There are various things I will be molding to finish off the airship, and these will be covered in part four. I will explain the process for the end caps then.

Back to the motor housings. I capped off the back of the housing with a piece of 0.60 ABS and drilled a 14mm hole in its centre for the axle and mounting ring to fit into. Once the front end cap is placed inside the housing it holds the motor in snug. Next I capped the P28 mount assembly with 0.60 ABS and drilled a 7mm dia. hole. This would be used for the wiring and pivot rod to slide into. The pivot rod actually simulates the drive axle from

the steam engine to the motors. For this I used 7mm outside dia. brass tubing. All of the electrical could then be run through the tubing to the inside of the ship and out the animation stand to the power source. For the ship to look realistic the motor mounts would have to be structurally convincing. I chose to go with three (there's that number again) support struts per motor. For these I used 8mm oval brass tubing. The top two struts were placed in horizontally and the bottom one angled at about 12 degrees. These then all met with the axle in a piece of resin I molded in a dram measuring cup. The bottom of the measuring cup just happened to be 28mm in dia. so it married up with the motor mount perfectly. To get the brass to hold with any amount of strength to the inside of the hull I used superglue and

automotive bondo to create a strong weld. Superglue works perfectly when adhering brass to resin.

When I tested out the motors the ship amplified the sound and vibration which in turn created a very realistic sounding airplane engine. Can't wait to see what it sounds like with the props on. These will be covered in part four.

Anchor Chain Outlets

I wanted the airship to have at least one complete maritime feature on it. It needs really cool anchors. The ship's anchors will be somewhat different than conventional ones, but the chain and capstans will remain the same. In order to achieve this look the chains will have to be attached to the capstans on deck then run through a trough to the outside of the hull on both sides. The trough was made by drilling a pilot hole into the second row of armour plating then angling it up to the deck. I used EMA P8 pipe to create the channel the chains would slide through. The pipe was cut a little longer so as to protrude above the deck and beyond the side of the hull. I fixed them with a modest coat of MC and did the final sealing and reinforcement gluing with superglue. Once the glue had set I used the Dremel with a sanding drum to take the pipe down flush with the surfaces. I then used the triangular and round cutting bits to oval out the openings in the trough to create a funnel appearance. Using a stone bit I smoothed out the marks on the funnel ends of the trough.

The capstans were made from 18mm solid brass rod lathed down to 16mm. I then drilled a hole through the centre of the rod to accommodate the pin so the capstan would be able to rotate. The rod was placed back in the lathe and carved down to the typical hourglass shape. I

made two of these because all ships must have brass on them. To finish off the capstans I used an antiquing gel to oxidize them.

Armour plates had to be placed on the deck of the ship for the chain to rest and move upon so as to not rip up the wooden planking. The capstans' positions were located in association with the anchor outlets centre of the deck one behind the other. Holes were drilled for the capstans and they were placed on the deck temporarily. This helped me line up each armour plate with capstan and outlet. The plates were fashioned from 0.18 ABS 10mm x 35mm. and were then riveted in the same way as the hull.


Railing Stanchions

All of the railing stanchions are made from brass rod too - excepting those on the pilot's deck which will resemble heavy wood beam constructions. The stanchions were made from 3mm brass rod and lathed into two sections each to hold two cable rails. Each is 27mm high from the deck to the top. The cable that will run through the stanchions is made from 0.5mm brass wire with a two strand braid. The wire used does not come in braided form, but I solved the problem by cutting a four foot length, brought the two ends together and placed the looped end around a nail in my work bench. The two ends were then tightened into the chuck of my drill. On slow speed I wound the two together to create a two foot length of braided cable. I then antiqued the cable and stanchions as I had with the capstans.

Thank you for tuning in again - the next part of this article will conclude the building of my Victorian style airship.

C. E.

Erasmus Designs & Miniatures
erasmusc@cadvision.com

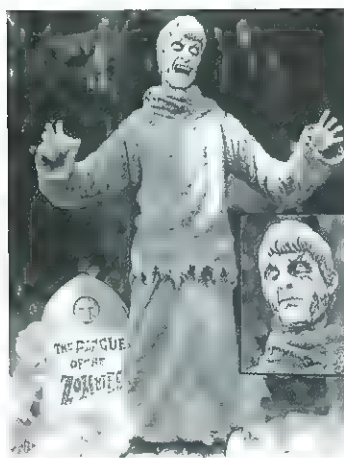


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Leave the best 'til last

A review of Polar Lights' Wolfman's Wagon

words bob gould • photographs tim hooper



After ploughing through King Kong's Thronester which was—to use someone else's phrase—a Labour of Loathe, I really started out in autopilot for this one, but perked up as soon as the pieces started to take shape. If you remember, my main complaint about the previous "Monstermobile" was that it was too large and lacking in detail. Fortunately the same cannot be said of this kit.

It comes as any standard injection-moulded kit in a multitude of single-colour pieces, most of which *nearly* fit together. You will have to be prepared to spend a fair amount of time carefully filling the resultant gaps in many of the jointed parts. I say "carefully" because the worst culprits are the ones that go to make up Wolfman's body—so it won't be

a case of just sanding the filler smooth. You are going to have to etch in the hair finish to match the surrounding areas, but please don't be put off by this, because it *is* worth it.

As usual, I started the manufacturing process by making up sub-assemblies; engine, exhaust system, car body, figure, *nats*—and it was here

that my flagging interest was revived. The finished kit was going to be quite neat and compact, with lots of little additions that would give it interest and detail—like a plague of fleeing rats; hands for foot-rests and feet for bumpers.

Initially all the halved pieces were held together with either a clothes peg or an elastic band whilst *Liquid Poly* adhesive was run around the joint. As assembly progressed I continued to use this "safe" form of adhesive, but there came a time when some of the attachments had to be instant—such as the horn, steering wheel and gear stick—so I resorted to using a Cyanoacrylate

adhesive—superglue in my case. I am always loathe to recommend anything like this for use on kits that are obviously attractive to children, because the stuff is dangerous. So proceed carefully.

OK, let's paint the thing. Everything was first given a coat of grey car primer which, if nothing else, shows up where the filler needs repairing and obviously gives you a good base undercoat to work from.

With this type of kit the recommended colours are always bold and garish. I'm more for the realistic subtlety of black, so I sprayed the bodywork of the car with silk black car spray. When dry, I went around the window frames with silver to represent the chrome trim that cars of yesteryear used to have before plastic and rubber became the norm. The engine block and exhaust system (still as separate



items) were given a complete coat of silver, with the air filter picked out in red, and then the whole thing was dirtied-down with a coat of *Citadel* Armour wash.

Steering wheel, steering column, gear shift and horn were all painted a mix of black, silver and brass which, along with matt black tyres and chrome hubs, resulted in a basically black and chrome car. *Very dark.* The *Wolfman* figure and rats therefore needed to be fairly light to lift the overall effect.

The rats were either light grey or brown, with a wash of black to pick out the ears, eyes and creases, and *Wolfie* himself needed to be a light brown with a pair of denim jeans. I started by painting all the skin/hair areas with acrylic



flesh then gave them a wash with light brown. Certain parts were then dry-brushed with a slightly darkened brown—around the musculature, the face and where the body meets the jeans. The features of his face can be painted even darker to give him a fierce countenance or—as I chose—left with a greater percentage of flesh, to keep him more cuddly looking.

The jeans were painted with a *Humbrol* blue which is a superb match for denim, with the tops of the creases and all the edges dry-brushed using white. I was really liking this kit by now—it's almost a pity that it's the last of the line!

Finally assembly was pretty straightforward. The engine popped into place and the exhaust pipes actually lined up. Each rat has its dedicated position and the wheels were easily fitted to allow them to rotate. I left the steering and gearshift columns until after positioning the figure, which itself needed some coaxing to make it sit in the car and rest its feet on the front wheel hand foot rests, if you see what I mean.

Well, what can I say? I think I left the best until last. It's

neat, compact, more believable than most and will make a good subject for yet another of Tim's "Fun Photographs". I'm sure we can devise a way of getting all the *Monstermobiles* in one shot...

SF&F International Pocket Guide:

Polar Lights injection moulded Wolfman's Wagon

Value for money: (£20:00)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Ease of assembly and instructions:

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Suggested for standard assembly: Liquid Poly and superglue adhesives; P38 filler (or alternative); needle files and fine emery paper.

Paints: Acrylic sprays in silk black and grey. *Citadel* acrylics in red, black, white, flesh, brown, copper, silver and Armour wash. *Humbrol* matt blue.

References: www.polarlights.com

"Yippee Ki Yay"

A review of Amquest's Die Hard. The Caricature

words bob gould • photographs tim hooper

This is not so much a "deform"—more of a "grotesque". I find the proportions and pose almost hideous—like something out of a Tod Browning movie. (That's going to get everyone running for their film encyclopaedias. Try circa 1930s.) But, for all that, it is very well crafted and detailed and even looks like *Brucie*—sometimes—if you get the light right. Most of the time it looks like *Anthony Quinn*. (OK, get the books out again. Look under *Zorba the Greek*.)

What you get are seven resin pieces that need little or no cleaning up at all. That's right. No air bubbles, fault lines or blemishes to speak of—so just give them a good wash in soapy water to remove the mould release agent. It's only when you hold the parts in place for "test fitting"—as you should always do—that you realise just how big the finished figure will be. I've usually found that "deform" also means "tiny".

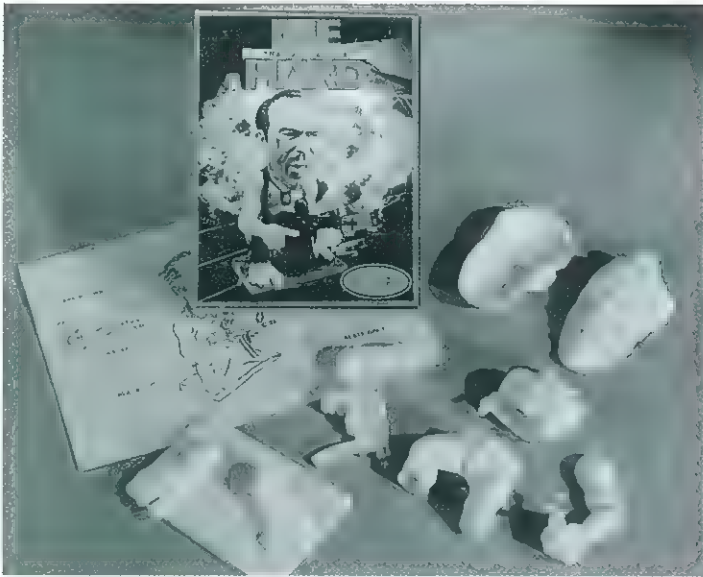
Assembly wasn't as straightforward as I first thought. If you face up the two arms onto the shoulders, you'll find that the machine gun—which is jointed halfway down the barrel—doesn't line up straight. So I started by drilling a hole in both mating surfaces of the gun and pinned it together, with the help of some Cyanoacrylate adhesive (*superglue* to you and me). Once stuck, I offered it up and found there was a slight air gap between the

arm tops and body. So, instead of using an adhesive to stick them together, I roughed-up the mating surfaces and used a car body filler to both bond and fill at the same time.

The two halves of the head went together perfectly. Superglue was again used, allowing it to extrude from the join and harden. This was then filed down, using a selection of needle files, to match its surrounding area—with

no need for any filler. As both the head to neck and body to legs joints were fairly large, I used a two part epoxy adhesive to give them some strength and then blended each in—particularly the neck—with more filler. This was finally cleaned up with needle files and fine wet and dry emery paper, which wasn't as easy as it sounds. Because of the pose of the figure, and the fact that certain body parts and weapons are so large by comparison to others, you will find that some areas are very difficult to get to—particularly for painting.

I didn't fix the trouser bottoms to the feet at this point—these are moulded onto the base—because that would have only compounded the masking problems. So it was an all-over spray with grey car primer and out with the paint pots and in with the video of the



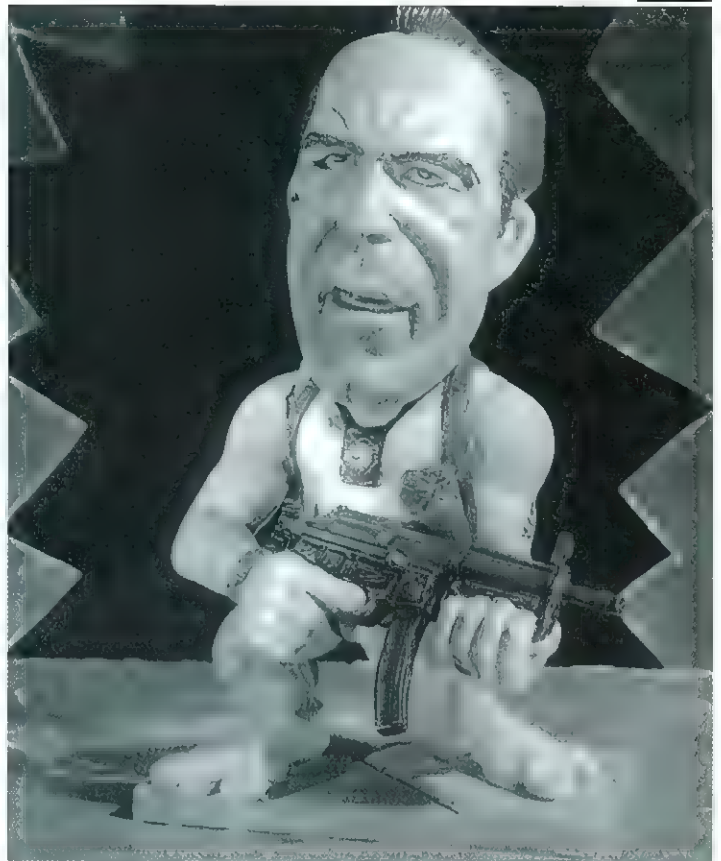
movie. *Whoops!* Three things jumped up and hit me—apart from the fact that you never see *John McClane* wearing a shoulder holster and badge. But that's fine as it adds a nice amount of detail to the figure. No, what was missing from the moulding and painting instructions was his watch, ring and tattoo. Out with the *Das Pronto* modelling clay and on with a watch strap—he wears his face-in, so you only see the strap and buckle—and a wedding band. The tattoo would come at the painting stage.

Two coats of acrylic flesh covered the skin areas; two coats of white for the vest; a single coat of *Humbrol* gunmetal (53) for the weapons; brown holster and straps; black badge pouch; dark brown hair and eyebrows (I

resisted the temptation to just paint them black, as this tends to render them featureless) and the trousers were left primer grey. These were all base coats to which I applied staining, washing, dry-brushing—anything that would add life and depth to the initial blandness of the colour.

I first worked a little brown into the wrinkles and crevices of the face, being careful to blend the edges away to nothing where possible. A little black could then be added to the more prominent recesses, particularly around the eyes, ears and nose. Similar treatment was given to the musculature of his arms—don't forget that this is a fun figure, so you can go a little over the top with the painting—and around the edges

where the flesh colour met the hair, vest, straps, etc. The dark brown hair was made even darker by washing black over it and



allowing it to dry in the well defined troughs. The five o'clock shadow around the upper lip and chin can also be picked out in black, but I would advise you keep it to where the texture of the resin has been prepared for you and not try to draw it on the sides of his face. You will find that the excellent sculpting of the detail in the figure allows for a wash colour to collect and dry in exactly the places you want it.

The machine gun was given a coat of *Armour* wash and then a dry-brush of silver which added a lot of relief and interest. The trousers were darkened slightly with a good wash of acrylic black—which also achieved the effect of making them look dirty. A similar treatment was given to the pure white vest, which really needed

to look like it had been to hell and back. Then followed lots of little additions to bring the character to life: blue eyes with black *Fineliner* pen pupils; deep red blood stains and scratches; flesh/red lips with deep red inner mouth and white teeth; pinker finger and toe nails followed by a wash of light brown; silver badge; the top-hatted skull and rose tattoo on his left upper arm. I'm pretty sure that just about covers it all.

I think, like me, you will have some fun with this kit. I must admit that I've had to learn a new way of painting this type of figure, with less emphasis on realism and more on effect. But it does make a nice change. Plus, I'm a fan of Anthony Quinn... I mean, *Bruce Willis*.

SF&F International Pocket Guide:

Amaquest's Die Hard. The Caricature.

Value for money: (price unknown at time of going to press)

Ease of assembly and instructions:

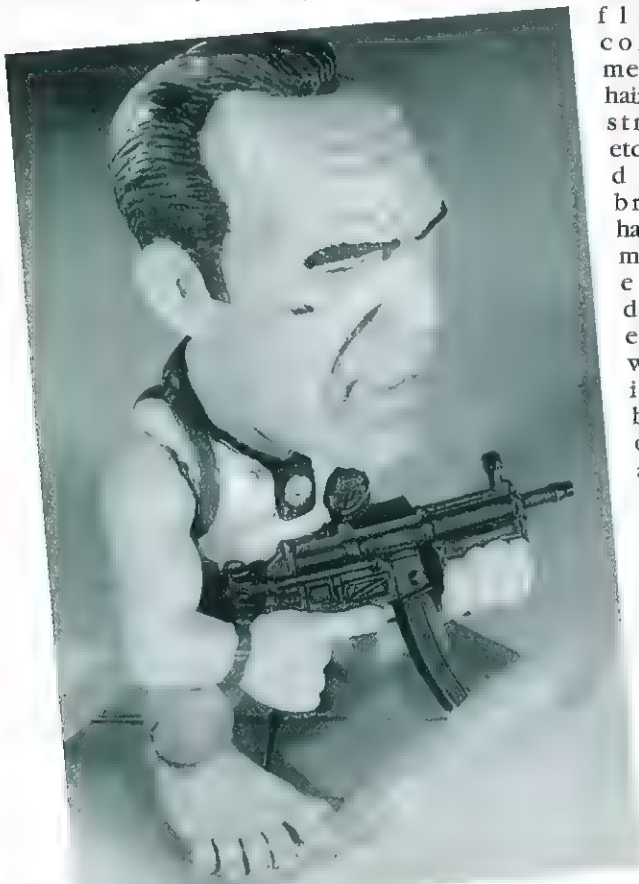
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Suggested for standard assembly: Epoxy resin adhesive; P38 filler (or alternative); needle files and fine emery paper.

Paints: Acrylic spray primer in grey. *Citadel* acrylics in red, black, white, flesh, blue, brown, gold, silver and *Armour* wash. *Humbrol* gunmetal.

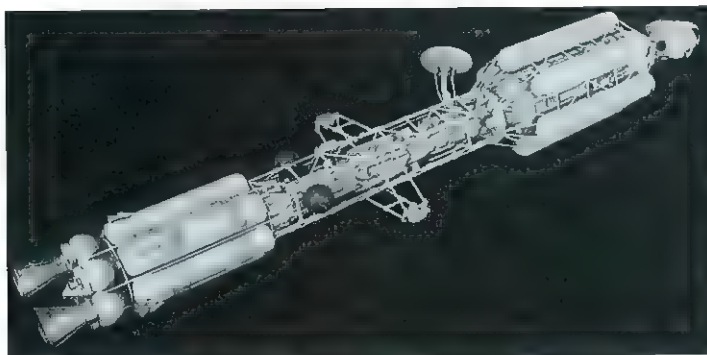
References: *Die Hard* video release.

Kit available from: *Parabellum*, 54, Vyse Street, Birmingham, U.K. (0121) 312 4770.



Scratchbuilding a studio sized replica of Space:1999's Ultra Probe

e. james small



Gerry Anderson's classic seventies science fiction series *Space:1999* was a landmark television program showcasing some of the best special effects seen at the time, which indeed hold credibility even when viewed today. The show treated us to beautiful model work in action, and creating replicas of these interesting craft can be quite challenging. When we try to create accurate replicas of science fiction spacecraft like these we must remember that the builders of the original models often made design changes or used available parts as they went along to make the models easier, faster, or less costly to build. Some of the parts or materials that were easy to obtain at the time may not be available today, so sometimes we must fabricate these parts or use substitutes that give a similar effect.

The Original Models

Three models of the sleek *Ultra Probe* were built for the episode *Dragon's Domain* to three different sizes. The smallest one was two and a half feet long at approximately 1/96th scale. A model was also built at five feet long (1/48th scale) plus a partial model at 1/24th scale. This larger scale model had only the front quarter constructed and was used to show the *Command Module* separating from the front of the ship. As a point of interest, the model that got the longest, most revealing time on screen was the smallest and crudest version, seen in closeup docking with the alien spacecraft!

Now, let's think about all this!

My decision to build the *Ultra Probe* was based on three factors. One: I liked the look of the ship (obviously!). Two: I had access to accurate documentation of the original models provided by professional model maker and good friend Chris Trice (who, by the way, builds the most incredibly accurate *Eagle* and *Hawk* spacecraft replicas the world has ever seen) and he was kind enough to give me exact dimensions allowing me to build a very accurate model. Lastly, it was a project I felt I could do fairly easily once I had studied how the model was built. With this in mind,

however, I decided not to replicate the kitbashed detailing exactly as on the originals for three reasons:

First—the originals were made in a tremendous rush and there wasn't really the time to create elaborate miniatures. The fairly basic detailing therefore looks quite effective on film for the brief moments you see it, but doesn't make for an exacting display model.

Second—the original parts used were from kits that are now, in some cases, quite collectible and thereby expensive and difficult to find—more expensive than the parts I ended up using, anyway!

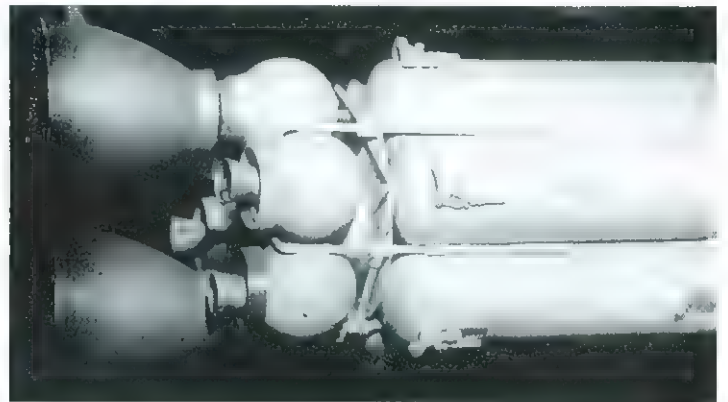
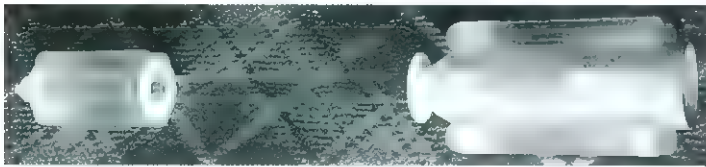
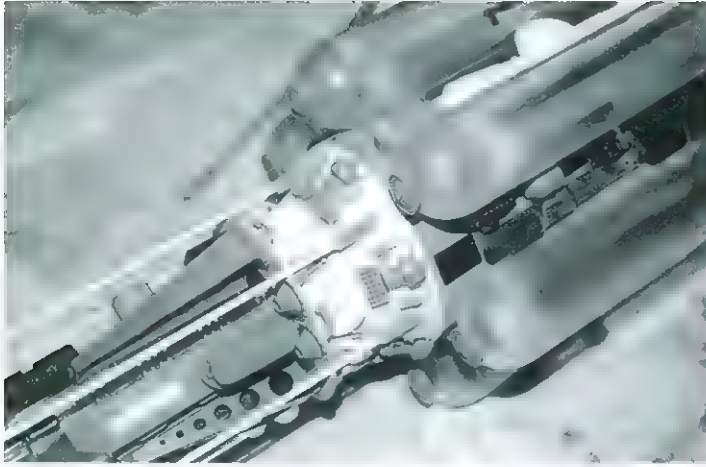
Lastly, I wanted more detail on my replica and I also wanted it to "make more sense" in terms of a display model that would be scrutinized a bit more closely than one which zooms by a camera on your television screen.

Keeping all this in mind, I therefore strove not to replicate the detailing exactly, but to keep the overall "aura" of the ship looking the way one would expect the model to look after having watched it on screen. My philosophy on kitbashing used on this model is also based on the fact that the three models of the *Ultra Probe* had vastly differing detailing on them because of the impracticality of reproducing this exactly on each of the three sizes built.



Top: My first finished model "in flight".

Right: Close-up of the original carved wooden *Command Module*. Note that the panel detailing is merely drawn on with a marker or pencil. (Photo © Chris Trice).



Top left: More kitbashed detailing is added to my third model...
Top right: Close-up of the fuselage and antenna section before weathering.

Above left: The main body's basic structure made from *EMA* acrylic and *ABS* tubing...

Above right: The original tail section with the egg-cup engine bells. (Photo © Chris Trice).

Left: My third model's tail section, made from *EMA* acrylic tubes, domes and hemispheres, nearing completion.

Below left: The original *Ultra Probe* model on display docked with the original *Dragon* ship model re-enacting a key scene in the *Space:1999* episode *Dragon's Domain* where the *Probe's* crew meets their grisly fate. (Photo © Chris Trice).

All of these discrepancies are, therefore, "fair game" for creative licence on my part!

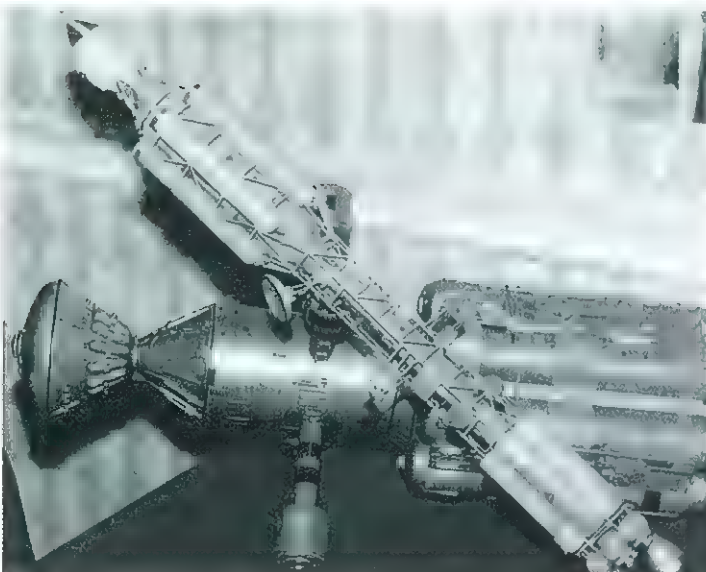
of kit parts I have on hand at the time.

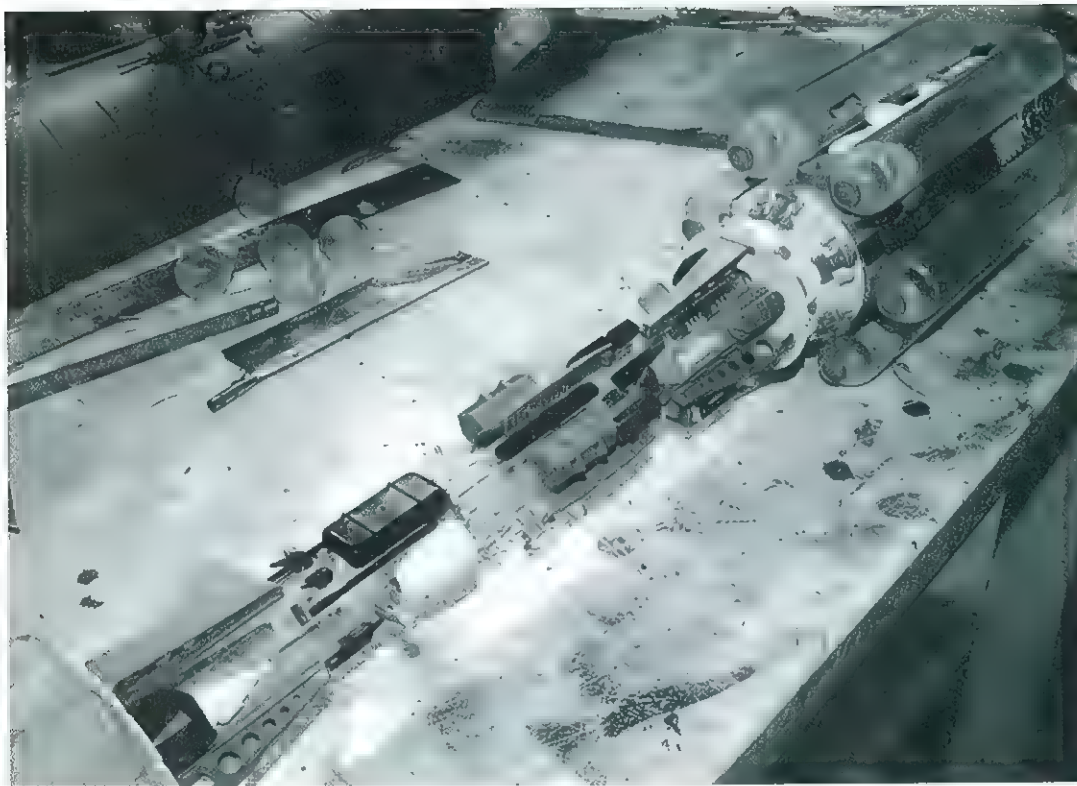
More differences...

The finished model you see in the photographs on these pages was the first model of the *Probe* I built. Since then I have made a second one for a friend, and now have a third one under construction which was originally started for a customer who then changed his mind and wanted to buy my first one instead! This third, still unfinished model (as of this writing) is the one you see here under construction in the photos. You will notice the kitbashing is again different from my finished model, because it is still impractical (and unexciting!) to try to replicate the detailing exactly every time, due mainly to the availability

Construction begins

I began by preparing the various subassemblies, which are primarily made from the expensive plastic tubes, domes and cones available from *EMA* (*Engineering Model Associates*). This was the material the original *Ultra Probe* models, and indeed many other *Space:1999* FX miniatures and props built freelance or by Wag Evans of *Space Models* (who built two of the forty four inch *Eagles*) and the crew at *Bray Studios* were constructed from. I made the basic fuselage and the various cylinders and spheres first, then positioned and glued them in place with cyanoacrylate (superglue), which was used for the bulk of the model's construction. The three discs





that are positioned along the length of the fuselage and which guide the layout of the complex spine were glued in place before the rear cylinders were positioned.

The cone mounted on the front of the fuselage had to be

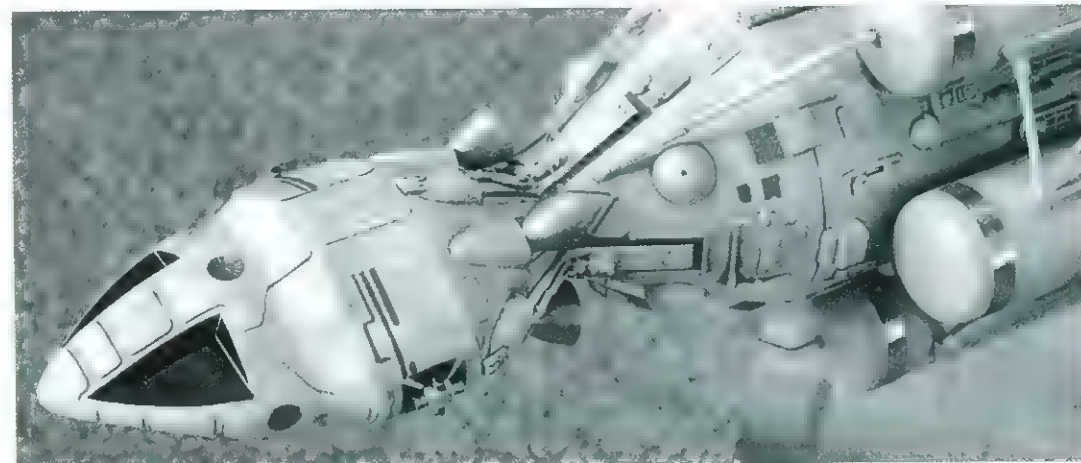
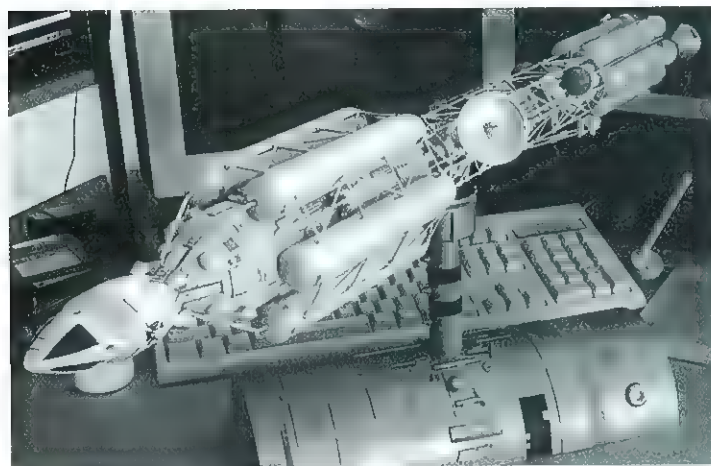
made from scratch, as its tip has an elliptical cross section to mate with the back of the *Command Module*. I did this by making a circle from styrene plastic to match the wide fuselage and an ellipse which would match the back of the *Command*

Module, drilling a hole in the centre of each and gluing them onto a length of tubing at the correct distance from each other. I left a bit of the tubing sticking out the front to mount the *CM* to. Using some scraps of balsa wood, I glued in stringers to roughly shape the outer skin of the cone, then I mixed up some auto body filler and plastered it all over this rough frame and sanded it to shape when it had set.

The *Command Module* on the original small model was quickly and rather crudely carved from wood, but I made mine from an *Airfix/MPC Eagle* nose cone I'd had laying around. Although it's ever so slightly too large in comparison to the original, it worked on my model, and if you studied the pictures before reading this I'll bet you didn't know it before I told you! The back of the *CM* was made

in the same manner as the front body cone, using plastic elliptical spacers, balsa wood frame and plenty of filler. A hole was left in the back to accept the stick I had left on the front of the cone. The *Module* was then detailed with bits of paper labels and tiny model kit parts. The side attitude thrusters are those from the shoulder pods of an *Airfix Eagle* kit. The docking clamps, or arms, were simply created from sheet styrene. The main thrusters on the *CM* were made from vacuum forming some plastic sheet over an "Elmers" glue-tube cap! For my second model (not shown) I built another nose cone from scratch that turned out even more accurate. For the third model I came out of my Homer Simpson "DOH!" mode and pulled an RTV mold off the completed second nose cone and front fuselage cone. It's a lot easier and faster to cast them up rather than make them from scratch!

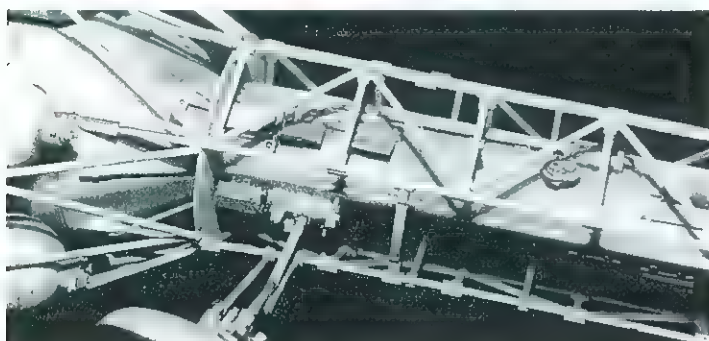
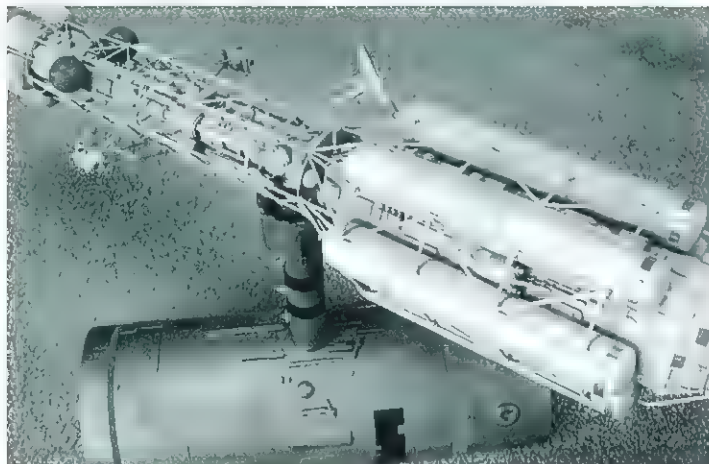
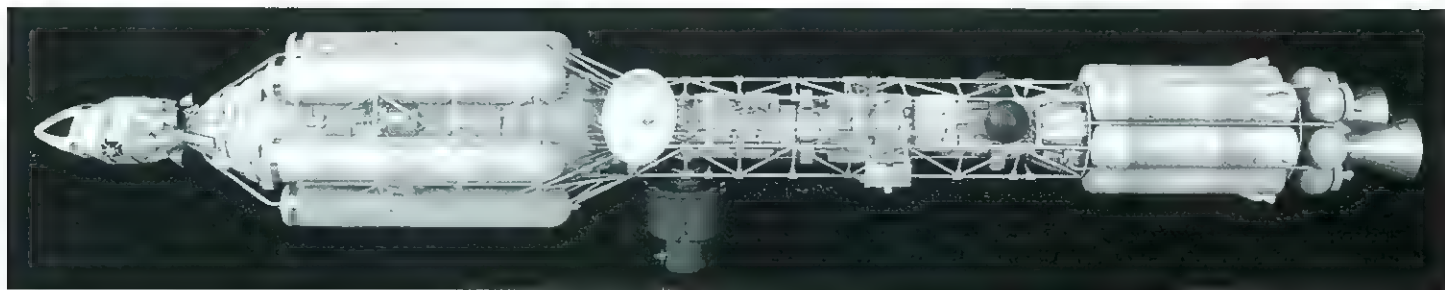
The fun part of the model was doing the kitbashed detailing! The only kit I bought specifically to use on this model was the *Tamiya* German eight-wheeled armoured car. This is the kit used most prominently in key areas on the original small model and I felt I should at least try for some authenticity. The rest was done with whatever I had on hand at the time. I mostly used a 1/48th scale *Mercury/Gemini* kit. The second model I built for a friend saw extensive use of some *NASCAR* kits, as the local *Wal-Mart* here in Brandon had a whack of them on sale at one-third of the regular price, so I bought a couple of arm-loads. These kits will show themselves in a lot of my future projects, I can assure you! When gluing on the kitbashing, you must keep a note of where the components such as the antenna, frames and red balls will be placed so that you don't accidentally "block" these areas.



Top: Amid the chaos of my building table, the kitbashed detailing is applied to the third model.

Above: The finished model on my computer desk to show the relative scale... of the computer!

Left: My finished model's forward section showing front body cone and *Command Module*.



The most grueling part of the model was the intricate girder work surrounding the fuselage, which is all made from *EMA* tubing, actually plastic coated piano wire. This makes the stuff difficult and very frustrating to cut and trim—however, it's quite necessary for a stronger model. I began by making the six frames that surround the main cylinders at the front half of the ship. All the short pieces that are at 90 degrees to the longerons are attached with little *EMA* snap tees. The angled parts are cut to size and glued in with place with cyano. The main spine, along with the two "outriggers" halfway down, are made in the same fashion. There are about a hundred and fifty of the expensive little snap tees used, and at about forty cents in Canadian scratch *each*, that comes to about sixty dollars...just for the little snap tees!!

Painting and Final Assembly

After the main bulk of the model was finished, leaving off the

engine bells and anything else that was not to be painted white, I sprayed the entire model using white primer from an aerosol can. When this was dry I gave the whole thing a "wash" of heavily diluted flat black and gray paint. A "wash" is made by taking a small amount of the colour of paint you wish to use and adding a lot of thinner to it, somewhere around a twenty-to-one ratio or more. It should just look like very dirty water. I used *Tamiya* acrylic paints (my personal favourite) and thinned them with alcohol. Normally you could just slop the wash over the model using a wide, long-bristled paintbrush, but because the detailing under the frame was so "deep", and relatively inaccessible, I opted to load the wash into my airbrush, held the model pointing nose up, and blasted the liquid all over the ship 'till it was saturated and actually dripping off the model, doing as much in one shot as I could to avoid unnecessary build-up as it dried. Any excess was dabbed away

Top: My completed first model docked on a section of the *Dragon* ship stand.

Left: My finished model's mid section attached to the *Dragon* ship stand.

Below left: Close-up of the midsection of the original model. (Photo © Chris Trice).

with a cloth or blown out with a blast of carbon dioxide-laden wind from my lungs! It's best to have the wash too thin to start out and add more paint when necessary, rather than have too much paint and have to get out the can of white primer again! After the wash was applied and had dried, I used some grey primer, again from a spray can, and dabbed a couple of very quick shots in areas that needed a bit more shadow, sometimes using a piece of paper held loosely against the model as a rough mask.

The few remaining components were then applied to the model. These included the big engine bells on the back. For the original small model some plastic egg cups were reportedly used but, despite my searching (and to my amazement!), I could not find any! I guess people prefer their eggs fried or scrambled nowadays, so I had to use a substitute. I didn't want to go to the bother of making a mold from scratch and vacforming them, so I used a couple of 1/48th *Mercury* capsules sprayed silver! Not really in keeping with the shape of the originals, but they're just about the right size and look reasonably good in my opinion. The two balls on either side of the fuselage (I wonder sometimes if the small spheres were put on there as a kind of inside joke!), were sprayed separately with red-oxide primer and attached to the fuselage.

Display

Finally, I made the stand to roughly resemble a section of the derelict spaceship that the *Probe* docked with in the show. The proportions are not exact here because I had the wooden base and support rod built before I came up with the idea of replicating a section of the

Dragon ship. Since, even without exact proportions, this manages to get the point across, I wasn't too concerned with the fact that this part of the model isn't completely accurate.

Conclusion... it's just the beginning!

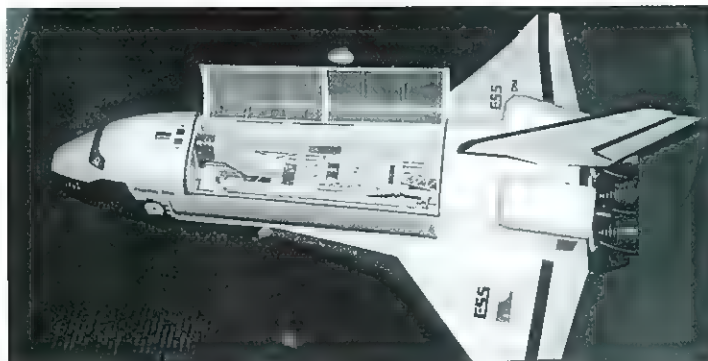
I hope you enjoy scratchbuilding models as much as I did with this one. As someone who, until prior to the *Probe*, was used to building and maybe modifying kits, it was my first attempt at building a reasonably accurate special effects replica using accurate dimensions, and I was quite pleased with the results (even if I do say so myself!). I estimate that it cost me about three hundred Canadian dollars in materials to build the model, and I think it was worth every penny. I intend to utilize my relatively new found scratch-building skills to their extent, and I look forward to making a lot more replicas of *Space: 1999* ships. If you wish to contact me about my custom model making, have any questions or just want to "yak" with me, you can e-mail me at: Eagle1@mts.net, you can telephone me at (204) 726-5087, or, if you're in no hurry, send a letter via "snail mail" to:

Jim Small,
Small Art Works,
3333 Rosser Ave,
Brandon, Manitoba,
Canada, R7B 0H1

For those of you who have access to the Information Superhighway, you can find a tremendous amount of documentation about the models used in *Space: 1999* on the *Space: 1999* Cybrary website: www.cybrary1999.com

Mission: highly probable Building the Frontier 1 Shuttle FX miniature

lewis morley



During the first season of the *Mission Impossible* TV series, filmed here in Australia a few years ago, I developed a story line surrounding a Space Shuttle mission, but, as it seemed beyond the scope of a show produced in about fourteen days in total, I decided it was too ambitious and didn't show it to the producers. I was consequently excited (and daunted) when a similar storyline found its way into the second season line-up and decided that I was going to have a say in the design and construction of any SFX models that would need to be made.

The plot of the *Target Earth* episode called for an independently built shuttle launched from an Australian facility. I pushed for a different look to NASA or Soviet craft, but the Art Directors limited this as we intended to use NASA stock footage for several sequences so the differences could not be too radical.

Starting with a Revell 1:144 scale *Orbiter* as a mockup, I widened the rear fuselage, placing the main engines in a straight line. The O.M.S. pods were altered slightly, the tail raked backwards, winglets added and the front fuselage stretched, with the nose pointed to a "Bull Terrier" profile. This change was the first to go when the set designers realised that it would place the actors too far away from the front windows for external shots, so we reverted to the snub-nosed NASA look. Most of the other changes made their way through to the finished design, but you'd need a direct comparison

with the NASA *Orbiter* to spot them.

The next stage was to determine a scale and what actions the model would be required to perform. Storyboards were established and much discussion with the Visual Effects Designer produced a clear idea of the model's requirements. Technically, I could only afford a week (sixty hours) of construction time, so we struck a bargain whereby I spent as much of my evenings and weekends as necessary in return for the model after filming. The model was about 600mm long in 1/48 scale. It featured three mounting points—belly, removable engine bell and nose cone—opening cargo bay doors with a full interior, detailed and illuminated cabin interior and a laser gun that could extend and rotate from the cabin roof.

I started with the engine bells, coating aluminium tube with auto putty, turning them to

shape on my lathe and detailing them with model railroad piping. From the two different-sized masters, I made two-part silicone rubber moulds. (I use *Dow Corning 3110* which is not particularly durable, but is very fast to use with No. 4 catalyst.) I had ordered some urethane resins that I had not previously tried and these were to prove invaluable. The engines were

cast in *Fast Cast #801* urethane, which allowed a pour-demould cycle of about twenty to thirty minutes, without the shrinkage or "tripping" of polyester resin castings. The fuselage and wings were carved in a single piece using two 100mm slabs of green urethane foam fastened with spray adhesive. The finished shape was then coated with polyester resin to seal and harden it. (Actually it was late and I got the catalyst bottle mixed up with an identical bottle of acid solder flux! I didn't realise this until I wondered why the soggy shuttle didn't seem to be "going off". Hastily I mixed up a "hot mix"—twenty percent catalyst to resin—and slopped it on in the hope that it would react with the layer of "goo" covering my model. After that it seemed like a good time to get some sleep. The next



The tile detail around the nose required a lot of freehand drafting.

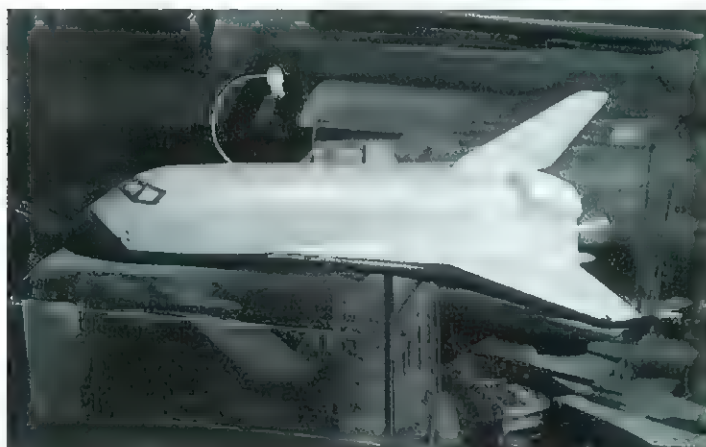


day the surface was tacky but firm.) I applied two layers of 2 oz. woven strand fibreglass cloth trowelled over auto putty and sanded it smooth using a palm-sized orbital sander. After extensive smoothing I was ready to hollow out the fuselage and install the internal mounts which consisted of 25mm square aluminium tube.

Firstly, I cut away the door area as a block using a razor saw and knife. Next I hollowed out the interior, scooping away the foam with a spoon until I hit the external fibreglass layer. I painted the interior with more resin and carefully cut the tip off the nose to allow the mounting pipe to run the full length of the ship. The nose tip and middle engine bell plugged into the mounting tube with balsawood lugs that allowed them to be slid out when required. The block of foam with the cargo doors on top was now scooped away, reinforcing layers of cloth added and the doors, still joined together, were attached to the hull with a series of nylon radio control flap hinges. The doors were then cut apart using a razor saw and a removable cargo bay was built from sheet styrene.

The cockpit was also built from styrene sheet and featured internal six volt torch bulbs and a removable laser gun mount operated by two long shutter-release cables. The ship was designed to be supported by 20mm aluminium "U" channel that slid into the mounting pipes and allowed the release cables and cabin wiring to be run out of the ship, away from the camera. The bow thruster vents were opened up with a *Dremel Moto-Tool* and elliptical aluminium tubing glued in at the correct angle and filed flush with the hull. Windows and hatches were likewise cut open and the cargo

pallet and experiments made from sheet, kit sprue and plastic coffee stirrers. (I always play "Spot the Widget" when I watch movies, so I was acutely aware of the possible effects—but I



was also working to a deadline so I couldn't be too finicky.) The radiator panels were cut from aluminium frying pan splatter screens and backed with black vinyl sheet. The manipulator arm was made from a radio antenna with auto-electrical spade lugs for elbow joints.

I always used auto lacquers for "Mission" because of their quickness. (I intended to have my lead levels checked once I'd finished this show!) The *Frontier 1 Shuttle* was no different—over the spray putty I laid a top coat of primer white, with heat shield sections in matt black with a heavy mist coat of silver and bronze to provide a contrast to the blackness of space. Next came the part I had been dreading—tiles! I quickly found that engraving them was a mistake and, after a quick respray, I sat down with pencil and ruler and went crazy for the next day. Tiling compound curves is no picnic! I used brass shim to get tight curves and luckily made only one or two mistakes. Those I

hid beneath "inspection hatches". A lot of my reference photos showed noticeable weathering on the tiles, even from one mission, so I mottled various panels with a brown coloured pencil, applied the markings that the graphics department had printed out on their computer and sealed the surface with *Testors Model Master Matte Spray*. (I was intending to pick out individual tiles in gloss, a la *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, but I had no time and I've met camera crews that drown models in dulling spray anyway.)

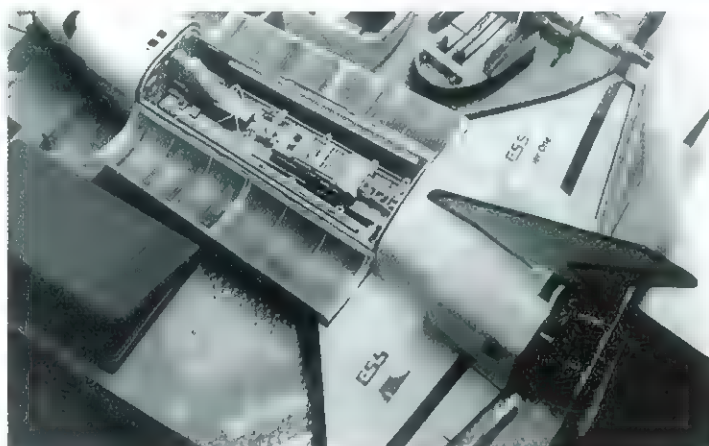
The windows were cut from 0.25 mm PVC sheet and stuck down on the outside using five-minute *Araldite*. (I doubt that I have to remind anyone to never use *superglue* for windows

painting department. The ship was mounted on its "U" channel, about 600mm from the *Scotchlite* F.P. screen. The channel passed through a small hole to a counterweight and battery box while a sweating modelmaker attempted to "fly" the model via verbal commands without the aid of a video split from the camera. (Motion Control was never like this!) Apart from one heartstopping moment when the control handle slid off the mounting pole and the ship lurched straight downwards, the shoot was remarkably smooth but strenuous. As well as manoeuvring the shuttle, I also hung precariously from the lighting cord and puppeteered several astronauts, (including a 1/6 scale *Revell Astronaut* heavily modified by my partner at the time, Jim Millett). Once the footage was "in the can" it was sent to the U.S. for final optical effects such as laser beams and golf ball stars to be added.

If you ever catch the *Target Earth* episode of *Mission: Impossible* you may have to disengage your credibility circuits but, hopefully, the visual effects will be worth a look. A lot of people worked for long hours to produce a few seconds of screen time, and while it may not be *Star Wars* at least it was designed, built and shot here in Australia!

This article first appeared in Australia's Science Fiction Modeller magazine. Reproduced by kind permission of Greg Martin, editor, SFM.

Top: the author hanging from the lighting rig with an extended rod for puppeteering. Centre: the converted *Revell 1:144 Orbiter* study model—note modified nose probe subsequently dropped. Below: bay detailing.



STATE SCENE

marc j. frattasio

Lost toys hard to find

Trendmasters 'Classic' **Lost In Space** line is apparently doing very well. The toys have been extremely difficult to find and can only be reliably obtained through *Trendmasters* on-line store at <http://www.trendmasters.com>. Even *Trendmasters* have run out of electronic B-9 robots and the *Jupiter 2* several times since they were released. In fact, many of these toys are unavailable from *Trendmasters* as of this writing, pending arrival of additional shipments.

Trendmasters still plan to release *John, Maureen and Penny Robinson* to round out their collection of highly detailed 'Classic' **Lost In Space** dolls. Additionally, *Trendmasters* are contemplating a toy version of the *Chariot* which may be 'in scale' with their *Jupiter 2*.

Apes collectables

Hasbro plan to enhance their **Planet of the Apes** product line in 1999 with a new range of highly detailed action figures. The first releases will be *Dr. Zaius*, *Cornelius*, a *Gorilla Soldier*, and *Taylor* in white astronaut flight suit.

Polar releases

Due to a printing error, two windows were inadvertently left off the decal sheet of the *Bates Mansion* kit as seen in *Hitchcock's Psycho*. The missing graphics can be printed from the *Polar Lights* web site at <http://www.polarlights.com> if you have access to the internet and a high quality color laser printer, or they may be obtained by mail by calling 1-800-MANTIS8 (US only). *Polar Lights* will release an all-new injection molded plastic kit of *Robby the Robot* from **Forbidden Planet** and the original **Lost In Space** tv program (*War of the Robots*) during late 1999 (possibly December). Additionally, rumor has it *Polar Lights* will also produce an all-new kit of the *Mummy* as played by Boris Karloff. A further rumor indicates that *Revell-Monogram* are considering a kit of the so-called *Delta Flyer* shuttle from **Voyager**.

New Playmates

Playmates, which apparently

had distribution problems last year, intends to concentrate on larger scale collector's figures and store exclusive products in 1999 and beyond. The new *Millennium Collector's Series* will consist of window boxed pairs of fully dressed 9" **Trek** figures. First out will be *Kirk* and *Spock* from the original **Trek** tv series, *Picard* and *Riker* from **ST:TNG**, *Sisko* and *Kira* from **ST: DS9**, and *Janeway* and *Chakotay* from **Voyager**.

Playmates will release a new range of 12" *Electronic Profiles* collector dolls which will include an unusual display stand that will speak the 'profile' of the character in the voice of the standard *Starfleet* computer (Majel Barrett?). Initial offerings in this new range will include *Kirk* and *Spock* from the original **Star Trek** television series and *Picard*, *Riker*, *Laforge*, and *Worf* from **the Next Generation**. Each character will be fully dressed in his respective dress uniform.

A number of new 12" **Trek** collector's figures are supposedly scheduled for release by *Playmates* during 1999. These will include *Andorian Ambassador Shras* (*Journey to Babel*), *Commander Spock*, *Chief Engineer Scott*, *Dr. McCoy*, *Sulu*, *Uhura*, *Chekov*, *Khan* (*Space Seed*), the *Mugato* (*A Private Little War*), and the *Gorn Captain* from the original series; *Troi*, *Q* (*Deja Q* outfit), and *Locutus of Borg* (*The Best of Both Worlds*) from **the Next Generation**, *Geordi* in **Insurrection** outfit and with cybernetic eye implants, and *Janeway* and *Seven of Nine* from **Voyager**.

Humans and aliens...

New six inch **Babylon 5** action figures recently released by *Exclusive Premier* include *Ambassador She'Lah* of the *Gaim Intelligence*, *Ambassador Juphar Trkider* of the *Drazi Freehold*, *Ambassador Vlur/Nhurof the Pak'Ma'Ra*, *Captain Elizabeth Lochley*, and *PSI Cop Bester*. Each figure comes with a small spaceship. Rumor has it that *Revell-Monogram* is contemplating a kit of the *White Star* spaceship from **Babylon 5**.

T-minus...

With the release of the first **Star Wars** prequel film, **Star Wars: The Phantom Menace**, less than a month away, **Star Wars** merchandise can be expected to dominate the collecting year. The American theatrical release of **Phantom Menace** is scheduled for May 21st. Start the countdown!

Ballantine Books have published *Star Wars The Essential Guide To Droids* by Daniel Wallace. This 224-page, large format paperback is the latest in a growing series of illustrated **Star Wars** guide books published over the past year or so by *Ballantine*. The new title covers the various mechanical life forms seen in the original **Star Wars** trilogy (including many that were only glimpsed briefly on screen) as well as those which 'appeared' in tie-in novels, comics, and in video games. Diagrams and back stories are included for each featured droid. Although some of the new CGI droids created for the recent **Star Wars Special Edition** such as the *Imperial spy droid* and *ASP droid* are covered in this book, there is no coverage at all of any of the droids which will appear in the up-coming **Phantom Menace** prequel. What makes this particularly unfortunate is the fact that at least one new droid type, the *Galactic Trade Federation Battledroid*, has been widely publicized and is even available now as a *Hasbro* 'action figure'.

Hasbro have announced that the three figures which will be included in their up-coming **Star Wars** pilot *Cinema Scenes* set will be *rebel pilots*. The window boxed collector's set will include *B-Wing pilot Ten Numb* (an alien of the *Solluston* race like *Lando Calrissian's* co-pilot *Nien Numb*), *X-Wing pilot Wedge Antilles*, and an anonymous *Y-Wing pilot*. Each *rebel pilot* figure will come with a removable helmet. An additional new *Cinema Scenes* window boxed collector's figure set has been announced by *Hasbro*. The *Jabba's Guards* set will come with *Klaatu*, *Barada*, and *Nikto*. Now where have we heard those words spoken before?

Hasbro have recently released a card stock *Jabba's Palace* diorama set which includes a *Han Solo* in *Carbonite* figure. This item is similar in concept to *Hasbro's Mos Eisley Cantina* diorama set. These colorful cardstock sets provide an effective display environment for your *Hasbro Star Wars* figures.

Hasbro have announced two new 12" *Action Collection Star Wars* figures, *Luke Skywalker* in *Stormtrooper* disguise and *Obi-Wan Kenobi*. The new *Luke* figure will come with a garbage-stained uniform and a *Dianoga* tail wrapped around his torso. The *Obi-Wan* figure will be sold with *Tatooine* desert outfit, a *blast helmet*, and a *light saber* as seen on board the *Millennium Falcon* in **Star Wars: A New Hope**.

Rumor has it that *Hasbro's* initial figure offerings for **The Phantom Menace** will include *Anakin Skywalker*, the *Galactic Trade Federation Battle Droid*, *Boss Nass*, *C-3PO*, *Chancellor Velorum*, *Darth Maul*, *Darth Sidious*, *Gasgano* and *Pit Droid* twin pack, *Jar Jar Binks*, *Ki-Adi Mundi*, *Mace Windu*, *Nute Gunray*, *Obi-Wan Kenobi*, *Ody Mantrell*, *Otoga-222*, *Princess Padme Naberrie*, *Queen Amidala*, *Qui-Gon Jinn*, *R2-D2*, *Ric Olie*, *Rune Haako*, *Senator Palpatine*, *Watto*, and *Yoda*.

Information continues to leak out on the new kits to be released by *Ertl* in conjunction with the release of **Star Wars: The Phantom Menace**. The *Naboo Starfighter* (snap together), the *Galactic Trade Federation Droid Fighter* (snap together), *Anakin Skywalker's Pod Racer*, and a deluxe die cast metal and plastic *Naboo Starfighter* will be released in May. In October these kits will be joined by the *Galactic Trade Federation Tank*, *Galactic Trade Federation Battledroid* with *STAP* vehicle, the *Galactic Trade Federation Landing Ship* (pre-painted snap-together), the *Galactic Trade Federation Transport Ship* (pre-painted snap-together), the *Republic Spacecraft* (pre-painted snap-together), and the *Sith Spacecraft* (pre-painted snap-together).

The reincarnation of International Rescue

Husband and wife team launch second series of authentic Thunderbirds character replicas



That Thunderbirds memorabilia is still much sought after today, some thirty five years after the legendary television series was first broadcast, is a testament to the popularity of Gerry Anderson's timeless sixties puppet classic. Diecasts, books, records, plastic toys, playsuits and bubblegum cards all appeared in the shops at the time, courtesy of the massive merchandising machine that was a subsidiary of the Andersons' mega-successful Century 21 organisation.

It's a safe bet that many of you reading this article who were children when the series first aired would, at that time, have traded every toy you possessed in exchange for 1/1 scale replica figures of the stars of the series. Alas, and excepting *Action Man* type representations of the show's "stars" that today change hands for astronomical amounts and a series of less than accurate string puppets, no "lifelike" replicas were to appear during the show's 60's run.

Now, however, Anderson fans who may have grown up on the outside but are still secretly young at heart will be delighted to learn that, courtesy of a talented sculptor and costume-maker husband and wife team, the Tracy brothers, plus beloved characters such as *Parker* and *Lady Penelope Creighton-Ward*, are being given new life in the shape of two ranges of highly accurate and detailed porcelain dolls.

Tony James of London's *Lavender Hill Comet Miniatures* genre kit and collectable company first came face to face with Duncan and Dawn Fidler, aka *Classic English Porcelains*, when he visited a Gerry Anderson convention some eight years ago. Following the joint creation of costumed porcelain Winston Churchill and Basil Rathbone figures Duncan and Dawn had on display a twenty two inch tall (the size of the original puppets) *Parker* doll. Tony was

astounded by the likeness to the original and the quality of the sculpt and subsequently encouraged the Fidlers to launch a series of puppet-scale twenty two inch *Thunderbirds* replicas under full licence from *Polygram Film International*.

These large, hand-finished characters retail at £299, include a signed certificate of authenticity from *Thunderbirds* co-creator Sylvia Anderson, and are limited to a modest five thousand pieces worldwide—not of each figure, but of the total production run for the entire collection. Three *Thunderbird* pilots have been released thus far—*Scott*, *Virgil* and *Alan*, plus a *Lady Penelope* figure in a two-piece outfit which will shortly be rereleased as a version in full evening dress; *Brains*, *Parker* and *The Hood*, a personal favourite of Tony James which features light-up eyes



courtesy of a switch hidden in a jewel on the character's chest.

Realising that the £299 price tag, although reflective of the amount of work that goes into each doll (Duncan fashions the faces, hands and feet from porcelain while Dawn creates and finishes the detailed costumes and bodies) places the twenty two inch range of figures beyond the means of many **Thunderbirds** collectors, Duncan and Dawn have negotiated with *Polygram* to produce a two-thirds original puppet size—ie fourteen inches—collection of figures identical in every way to their larger cousins excepting size and the fact that they are set in a fixed pose. These, limited to two thousand copies of each subject in the

range, will retail at the more modest price of £99.00 each including postage and delivery in the UK, and, if successful, will be released at the rate of one figure approximately every three months. The new collection kicks off in July/August with *Parker* in chauffeur outfit (a butler outfit version is to follow) and *Scott Tracy* in *International Rescue* uniform. Collectors should note that one thousand of the two thousand run on each of these figures have already been snapped up by the Japanese market.

Produced to exacting standards in China, the new dolls, as with the larger figures, feature glass eyes and real hair and are hand finished. Included with each

doll will be a display stand and a brass plaque, the characters being intended as collector items rather than jointed play figures, and therefore requiring careful

display, preferably behind glass. It is hoped that Sylvia Anderson will once again provide signed certificates of authenticity for the series.

Tony, Duncan and Dawn have fingers tightly crossed regarding the success of their new range, and ask that collectors be supportive of what is essentially a cottage industry endeavour. Solid response to the two ranges will not only mean that further figures from both collections can be released, but will also allow Tony James to realise plans—with the relevant permissions—to produce similar-sized display characters from series other than those of Gerry Anderson featured in classic television shows of the 1950s and 60s.

Full details of both ranges of *Classic English Porcelains' Thunderbirds* doll collections are available from *Comet Miniatures* and pre-orders for the fourteen inch figures are now being taken. Air postage per figure on the fourteen inch characters to destinations other than the UK is as follows: Rest of Europe: £10.00; USA: £15.00; South East Asia: £25.00.





Previous two pages:
Duncan and Dawn Fidler, aka
Classic English Porcelains pose
with a few of their recreations.

Dawn works on *Penelope's* stylish
wardrobe.

Virgil's near completed head and
the final *Virgil* dolls are lined up for
packing.

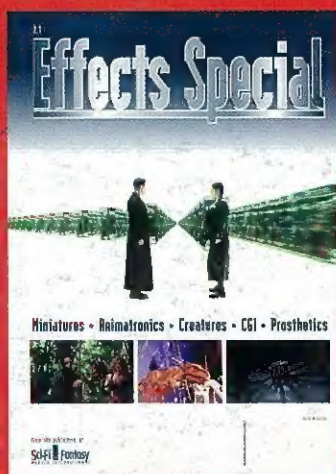
Duncan puts the finishing touches
to a *Captain Scarlet* head.

This page: Along the top row are
the 22" versions of *Scott*, *Virgil* and
Penelope.

Left: 22" *Parker* and, right, the
14" version in chauffeur's uniform.

Bottom row: 22" *Hood*, 14" *Scott*
and 22" *Alan*.





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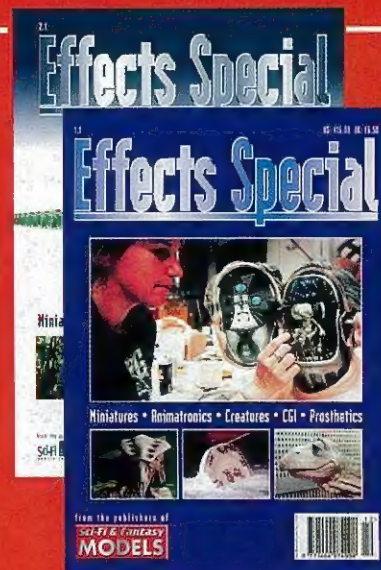
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